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ROB RUSKIN,

THE PRAIRIE ROVER:

OR,

THE FOREST MAID.

BY MRS. ORRIN JAMES,

AUTHOR OF "THE WRECHER'S DAUGHTER," "OLD JUPE," ETC.

NEW YORK:
BEADLE AND ADAMS, PUBLISHERS,
No. 68 WILLIAM STREET.

ROB HERRIN

THE PRARIE ROVER

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THE FOREST MATE

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1884, by
BEADLE AND COMPANY,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the
Southern District of New York.

BY THE AUTHOR

OTHERS OF THE SERIES

NEW YORK

BEADLE AND COMPANY

107 N. WALL ST.

THE FOREST MAID.

CHAPTER I.

THE RACE FOR LIFE.

A SUPERB black horse stood alone on a wide prairie—no, not alone, for beside him, stooping to gather a plant from the grass, and holding his bridle lightly, was a young girl. There seemed to be but those two living creatures in sight. The prairie rolled in emerald and purple waves. Swift shadows and broad flashes of sunlight alternated on its surface.

But, we are too much interested in what then transpired, to care for the beautiful aspect of the prairie, or to notice the silver length of river which bound it on one side, for the horse has given a shrill neigh of warning, and the girl, with a startled, backward glance, has sprung to his back, crying out sharply to him.

And then began a race such as our “fancy” people, with their blooded brutes of endless pedigree, never saw or dreamed of. It was a warm morning in May, fragrant with a million blossoms, and had promised a pleasant day, until the rapidly rising clouds, and a fluttering sob of wind, told that a sudden shower, if nothing worse, was coming. And now, as it were out of the clouds and wind, bearing to the east, the racers appeared.

Ha! this was no “mile heat” over a beaten and prepared road! This was a ten-mile stretch over trackless ground, and the stakes were as high as ever were raced for—a human life.

Here they come! four of them—the first, a few rods in advance, the woman, riding her coal black steed;—behind her, and nearly abreast, on untamed stallions of the plains, three men, two of them Indians, the feathers of their head-dresses streaming flat in the wind, leather reins in one hand, bow and arrows in the other, their faces horribly eager, their

small black eyes shining, their yellow leggings flaming as they dug their spurs into their horses' flanks. The other man was pale with the same dreadful intentness; he wore the dress of an ordinary hunter and his rifle lay across his saddle pommel.

"No catch her; me shoot?" asked one of the Indians, coming up close to the white man who had hitherto been in advance.

"No, no! don't shoot. She'll soon tire out. She can't stand it long, at that rate. I wish to take her alive."

"Me shoot horse?"

"No. She might be killed when he fell—besides, I want that horse almost as much as I do the girl."

"Much great horse," said the Indian, and he said truly.

The coal-black animal which the woman rode was "much great horse." If we stood on the prairie in advance of her and watched her sweeping up, we would realize his immense power, the ease of his motions, and his superb size and color, and see his bright eye darting fire—the fire of anger and disdain—as he bounded forward with long strides, conscious of pursuit, and perhaps half-humanly conscious of the terror and distress of his rider and of her still hopeful confidence in his masterly ability to extricate her from the deadly danger into which she had wandered. We would realize, too, how young and how frail was the woman who had to cope with this danger, for as her hat had long ago blown off, we could see her fair, startled face with its wide-open blue eyes, parted lips and its setting of brown hair glittering in the sunlight, which, falling from the east, smote her full in the face, though all behind her was black with shadows. Her pliant form leaned a little forward, as if her will flew faster than her body; she had no saddle, no whip, only a rough bridle-rein, and thus she dropped as an arrow whizzed past her with a fine, singing noise which told how close it came to her ear. Bending as low as possible with her hands clasped tightly in his streaming mane, she cried, in a low voice:

"Faster, faster, Diamond! oh, Diamond, how you lag!"

It was a slander on the horse to accuse him of lagging who was flying as swift and straight as the wind that roared behind him, and the girl herself would be the first to acknowledge it if he and she ever got out of this difficulty, which was

doubtful, for those who pursued were men who never rode any but the best animals, and there was a crisis to arrive where their skill would give them the advantage, even over Black Diamond's unequalled powers.

Of this they were speaking, as they pressed on, after the discharge of the arrow, which, with the cunning of his race, the foremost Indian had fired, not with any intention of harming the girl, but to alarm and disconcert her, if not even to bring her to surrender.

"Catch old Zinc Dollar's gal to surrender," muttered the hunter; "she's as gritty as her dad, every bit."

"She git 'way, sure," said the Indian, seeing that the distance between them was widening instead of lessening.

"I'll kill her, before *that*! But she won't—she can't. There's the river to cross. If it's necessary, we'll wing that beast in the water; *she'll* be safer there, an' we can pick her up. But, we must save the horse if we can. I've had my eye on Black Diamond too long, to sacrifice him if it can be helped."

However, talking interfered with the intense endeavor they were making, in which their own muscles were all set and steeled like those of the animals they rode; in silence they plunged forward, breathing hard, urging their horses with cruel spurs, until they could see the river, toward which the pursued was flying, glittering half a mile in front. At that moment the damp warm breath of the tempest rushed past, and clutched at the waving skirts and streaming hair of the girl.

"Big thunder coming," said one of the red-men, looking back at the west, now black as night, and streaked with chain-lightning.

"On!" shouted their white leader. "I'll give each of you a rifle like this I carry, and a keg of fire-water, if you cut her out before she reaches the river."

They had strained every nerve before; now they seemed impelled to still fiercer exertions. The sight of the river had kindled Black Diamond, too; for, with a shrill neigh, as of defiance and rejoicing, he leaped forward with a speed it seemed impossible to equal.

"Good fellow! brave fellow, good Diamond!" murmured his mistress, kissing his neck. "Oh, the river! you can swim.

my darling, I know that! You will save me, my splendid fellow." But another arrow sung past, reminding her of a danger which threatened Diamond, against which strength nor endurance were of any avail.

"If they get us, they must kill us first. Oh, Diamond, I hope they'll not shoot *you*, and so capture me! If they do, I've a knife in my belt. Never mind. I can die. But, I will never give up to Rob Ruskin—never! Faster, my beauty faster!"

Then she no longer even spoke to or caressed her horse, but hung close to his neck, for she heard the trampling thunder of hoofs growing nearer, and Rob Ruskin's voice calling out to her to surrender, or he would fire.

"Fire, then," she murmured to herself, while Diamond, hearing also the hoof-beats coming nearer, leaped along with still more immense and superb bounds. Almost as fleet as the storm was his progress, but not quite; the wind clashed down upon the water while he was yet some rods away, and the yellow stream, full and broad with spring redundancy, roared like a tawny lion, rearing a hundred manes of foam betwixt shore and shore. It looked an angry tumult into which a timid woman might well hesitate to enter. But there was worse behind her, and the girl spoke again, encouragingly, to her horse, through whose frame ran a momentary shiver.

The savages gave a wild yell as horse and rider stood out clear, on the bold bank, with the sun striking against them; then the yell was cut off by a burst of thunder so appalling as to cause their animals to swerve and rear, the clouds rushed on, shutting out what blue sky was left, an almost evening gloom covered every thing, through which the wind-lashed waves glimmered with crests of amber foam. For a moment or two, even the white man's horse was unmanageable, so had the loud peal of thunder startled him; but his rider gained a swift control over his beast, urging him forward on to the bank, where shortly before the girl was seen.

"I told you so! Plucky to the last," he muttered, "and what's to be done, now?" for Black Diamond was swimming gallantly, and the girl was clinging to his neck, though the tornado dashed the water clear over her every instant, and seemed as if it would tear her from her hold.

"Blast this storm, I say! I shan't dare to shoot her horse, for she will surely be drowned before I can reach her, with the river in such a state. It's nothing to do now, but to see whose horse holds out the longest. In with you, fool!" and he compelled the fiery stallion under him, which trembled in every limb with fright at the tempest and the turmoil of waters, to plunge into the flood; but this brute, magnificent as he was, was no match for Black Diamond, who swam bravely forward like a good ship well manned.

Heretofore no rain had fallen; Rob Ruskin and his dusky suite hardly had entered the river when it came down in a vast sheet, much more like a waterfall than like rain; it shut out all sight of the person pursued, and rendered his rifle, for which he had no covering, useless.

"A good joke—we'll all drown together," continued the hunter, who could see nothing of the girl nor of his attendants; "the Lord's a-fightin' the gal's battle, I reckon. I wish he'd a' gi'n us fair play, and no intervention. He must think me a hard old cuss if he has to drown her to save her! If he takes us both to kingdom-come, I'll never set eyes on *her* ag'in, for, doubtless, we'll go in opposite directions when we get *thar*!"

More wildly blew the wind, more blindly clashed the rain; his horse struggled in the water, moaned, floated idly down with the current, instead of breasting it, until the spurs of his rider urged him to renew his efforts.

Rob Ruskin knew not whether to turn back or go across; he was now so far out there was but little to choose; he felt a pang of regret at having driven that brave, delicate girl into such appalling peril, for he loved her, with all the love of which such natures as his are capable; and, although he had vowed to kill her, if he could not secure her alive, still he felt now as if he had not really meant it. He would have been glad to have seen her horse climbing in safety the opposite bluff; but rider, horse, bluff, all were shut from sight, save the muddy waters which roared about him.

Almost as swiftly as it had closed in, the storm broke a cloud parted, letting down a sudden gleam of light on the landscape; the hunter looked eagerly about him with the keen eyes of one trained to out-door life, and saw Black Diamond

struggling to land, having twice planted his feet on the shore and been washed off by the slippery nature of the ground and the force of the current. At that sight his repentance vanished like the storm.

"Shoot," he cried to the Indian who had succeeded in keeping up with him, "my gun is wet. Shoot the horse, as soon as he lands."

The red-skin raised his bow, and as Black Diamond nobly secured his footing, and panted up the bluff, with his mistress yet clinging to his neck, the dastardly arrow was fired and the proud winner of the race brought low by treachery. Black Diamond staggered backward a step, slipped again into the stream from which he had just emerged, and floated helplessly down.

Ruskin saw the girl kiss passionately, once or twice, the beautiful arched neck now drooping low, and having thus bidden farewell to her murdered pet, slip from his back, and strike out for the shore, swimming as boldly as she rode.

"True grit," cried the hunter, with fierce admiration; "but, I've got you now, Lizzie Dollar, and you might as well gi'n up."

When she reached the shore he was still five minutes from it; she ran up the bluff and disappeared behind a belt of cottonwood brush, but he did not think much of this advantage which she had gained, because she was on foot, and he soon could overtake her when he was once on land. He knew that her place of refuge was three miles from this point, and he would reach her before she had gone half a mile.

Great, therefore, was his rage and disappointment, when, his weary horse struggling and stumbling up the bluff, he saw, on mounting to its top, his prize snatched from his eager hand. A stranger, also well-mounted and armed, as people in that country generally were, especially when traveling alone, had arrived at this particular point just in time to answer the girl's sharp cry for help; he had lifted her to his saddle-bow, and was riding, already out of arrow-reach, back toward the forest to which the maiden pointed him.

It would be vain to pursue, with their trembling, hard-breathing animals; and with an oath as savage as any he ever had uttered, Rob Ruskin gave up the chase. The woman had won in the race.

"Oh, thank God!" she said, as looking back, she saw her enemy standing idly, looking after them; "he has given up—he will come no further!"

"What harm would he have done to you? I should not think there was a rascal in the world mean enough to injure you!"

The girl had not noticed the man to whom she owed her salvation; she had cried out to him in desperate appeal as he was riding by, and made him comprehend the necessity of flight for herself and himself; he had helped her swing to his horse's neck, where she had small opportunity to look at him; but now, as he spoke, in such a sweet, well-modulated voice, and so pleasantly, she half turned in her precarious seat, and smiled in his face, blushing rose-red, too, as she saw that he was young, handsome, and a gentleman—the latter being so great a novelty in that wild region, as at once to kindle her curiosity as well as to awaken her timidity.

"Oh, yes! he would murder me, as quickly as he did my poor horse. He is angry with me—very angry. He thinks I injured him—though I never did. That is—not any more—than I could help—" becoming confused, as she attempted to explain.

"I think I see through it," said her new companion; "he wanted you to marry him, perhaps, and you would not."

She blushed and said nothing.

"He must be a revengeful fellow," continued the other.

"He is—worse than an Indian," she answered, in a shuddering voice.

"Where shall I take you?"

"I belong at Jackson's, the little settlement under the fort. But you need not go there with me; as soon as we get out of their sight, on this forest-road, I can run home alone."

"I will never see you safe at the settlement."

"Oh, thank you!" She was silent a little time as they rode forward at a moderate pace, then quietly burst into a fit of weeping.

"Why do you cry? I'm afraid your nerve laves been dreadfully shaken by this adventure."

"I was thinking of Black Diamond—of my poor horse, sir."

“What of him?”

“They shot him, just as we reached the shore. Oh, sir, if you had seen him, you would have said that he was the finest animal in the world. The whole country knows him! I loved him so!” turning up her tear-wet face to the traveler.

“I dare say,” he answered, gazing down into the sweetest as well as the most innocent countenance he had ever beheld—a face always lovely, but exquisitely beautiful with grief and excitement, tears in the blue eyes, and the long, flowing hair beginning to break into a thousand rippling tresses on either side, as the wind dried out of it the water which had deluged it. “He was fortunate to have possessed your love.”

His hearer did not understand the language of gallantry, answering him with a puzzled smile like that of a child. Then she asked:

“Where were you going, sir?”

It was the fashion of the new country to ask questions, and the stranger already had become accustomed to it; he smiled and said:

“I am in search of a person I am little likely to find. I had but a faint clue to trace him by; still, I really thought I should find him at Jackson’s. I was disappointed; and now I hardly know whither to turn, unless it be to turn about and go back to New York, from whence I came. I must have gone forth this morning expressly to save you; for, positively, I had no object beyond a peep at the opposite prairie, which I was told was very fine, and to breathe the fresh air. I did not think the storm would reach us so soon. Now tell me, if you will, why you were across the river, alone, when you might know it to be dangerous.”

“I did not think it dangerous, sir—at least, not very; and I trusted to Black Diamond to take care of me. He was such a knowing horse, sir. You see, my father is a botanist, if you know what that is—most people round here don’t; they call him doctor, wizard, and more names, too”—in a lower voice—“and he wanted some specimens which don’t grow this side of the river. I offered to try and find them for him; but I had no idea Rob Raskin and his Indians were about, or I should not have crossed.”

“How did you get over?”

"Get over? Oh, we swam, of course."

"We swam, did we?" mimicked the traveler, laughing outright, but not in a manner to offend her, as he thought of the horse and his rider getting about in this independent way. "I wonder what my sisters at home would say to that?"

"Have you sisters?" wistfully, almost sadly. "I wish I had. Don't they swim their horses in New York?"

"They are hardly as skillful horse-women as those I meet out West. They could not ride without a saddle, for instance."

"That's curious!" remarked his companion, not without a curl on her lip.

"They have not your accomplishments," he continued, still laughing.

"Father used to live in New York—in the city," she said.

"He did? What is his name, may I ask?"

"Zinc Dollar."

"What a queer name!"

"Who are you looking for?"

"For a man by the name of Bryant Lynn. He emigrated to Illinois about ten years ago. I thought I had traced him to this settlement; but the people here know nothing of such a person."

The young girl's face wore now an expression of the deepest interest.

"Why do you seek him?" she almost whispered. "For his harm?"

"No," he answered earnestly, noticing something peculiar in the intelligence of her look. "On the contrary, I hope to be the bearer of good tidings."

"It is my father," she said, in a low voice.

"Your father!" he echoed, pressing her about the waist, which he had clasped to hold her on the horse, with a joyful impulse. "I am glad then that my long search is ended. Pray, why does he go by the queer name of Zinc Dollar?"

She blushed and hung her head, saying, after a moment:

"He can tell you best. The neighbors call him so."

By this time they were in sight of the settlement, and she slipped to the ground, walking beside the traveler into the one straggling street which ran along the edge of the bluff, just

high enough above the flat shore of the river to be safe from spring and fall floods. A miserable street it was, composed of twenty or more one-story log-houses, with the usual accompaniment of two or three groceries, (which sold more whisky than any thing else) a tavern and a "store." In sight, about two miles below, stood the fort, from whose walls floated the American flag.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRAP OF PAPER.

LIZZIE DOLLAR did not seem at all abashed as she walked through Jackson's beside the stranger, though every woman in the settlement came to her door, every dog barked, and every idler about the groceries and tavern took his pipe out of his mouth to stare after them. Everybody knew everybody in that forlorn neighborhood, and they were too accustomed to all sorts of hardships and vicissitudes for her to be embarrassed by the consciousness that her dress was dragging about her feet still dripping from her river-bath. Her friends asked no questions, however, supposing she had been caught in the heavy shower.

"That's the dandified chap as stopp'd with us las' night," said the tavern-keeper, as the two went by. "He's huntin' up a chap as doesn't live in these parts. He went out this mornin' to see how he liked the looks o' our place—thinks some o' locatin' land. Got caught in the shower. Golly, they're wet—both of 'em! 'Twon't hurt *her*—she's tough as a pine-knot—lives out-doors. But he's one o' your city chaps—looks as though water 'd spile him, as easy as't did the caliker wife bought to your store las' week, Bill Jones, which you warranted."

"Did I warrant it?" asked Jones, with a sly look. "Then I must 'a warranted it to fade, for it's the cursedest calico for that I ever had in my store."

"Never mind—I'll come even with ye afore my bill's settled," said the landlord, good-naturedly.

Jones had no doubt that he would keep his word. It was diamond cut diamond with the majority of the outlaws and vagabonds who first settled along the Missouri river from St. Louis to Council Bluffs.

Meanwhile the girl and her companion passed along to the extremity of the straggling village, and beyond, to a log-house, standing in the shade of three immense cottonwoods, a little back from the road, and in full sight of the river, which lay about a quarter of a mile away, a flat piece of land intervening between it and the bluff on which the fort and settlement were built. A garden patch lay behind the house, but no fences of any kind were to be seen.

"Tie your horse to the post, and come in, sir," said the maiden, leading the way into a good-sized room where a negro woman had just finished scrubbing the floor.

"C'lar out, Lizzie, or I'll box yer ears," she cried as the girl entered. "You do make de mos' dirt any w'ite lady eber I waited on, standin' dar drippin' like a waterin'-pot right on my floor I jus' done wipin' up. You do beat all I ever see'd to get yerself in scrapes jes' like any common folks."

"Don't scold, now, Dimity; I've brought home company," answered the girl, who laughed, knowing Dimity's bark was worse than her bite.

"Scold!" cried the woman, rolling up her eyes in astonishment, "what you mean by such intercessions, missa? I nebber foun' fault wid you sence you was nine ye'r old and fell head foremost in keg o' apple-butter tryin' to hook it w'en my back was turned. Whatever my trials is I don' lighten 'em by scoldin'—dough de saints knows I's plenty ebery day I live. 'Twould turn anybody's temper into buttermilk to scour dis floor as w'ite as your own hands, honey, and here you a-turnin' it into a mud-puddle, an' de doctor's allers luggin' in dem nasty weeds—"

"Never mind, now, Dimity, about that. I'm going to put on a dry dress, and this gentleman wants to see father. Where is he?"

"Lord-a-massy knows—I don't. 'Spect me to keep track o' him?—he's cut, pokin' round in de grass as usual, an' he'll come home and litter up dis room wid his trash. Oh, 'scuse me, sir," she added, with a curtsy, as she caught sight of

the visitor, who now, having tied his horse, stepped into the house; "take a cha'r ef you kin find a dry spot. I tries to keep dis place in order, but dat pickaninny make me a world o' trouble—an' de doctor—he's wuss."

"Never mind aunt Dimity," said the young hostess, with a mischievous smile. "Father says I act as a safety-valve when she gets too high a pressure on. You see she still regards me as a little girl—a legitimate object for her to scold and direct—and I don't know but I am. I suppose I do tease the life out of her! Neatness is her hobby. She is well named Dimity."

"She could not have a more harmless hobby," answered the young gentleman, bowing to the old woman with a smile which melted her at once into softness. "Good-morning, Dimity. You must excuse your mistress, and me, too, for bringing our dilapidated selves into your beautiful room. We got caught in the shower, and the young lady was nearly drowned in the river. She was crossing it when the storm came along."

Dimity threw up her black arms.

"Dat's just it! I don't have no peace o' my life, wid dat young-un's capers. I felt it in my j'int's as I was scourin' dis yer floor, an' I said to myself, 'dat chile are in some pickle 'r 'nuther.' Ebbery day she takes my strenf away, till I'm weak as a cat, scaring me one way or tudder. I declar' I feel like a dish-rag,"—and she sat down on the back door-sill as if she were very limp indeed. "I shall be glad when she's growd up and got sense. She'll be off my han's den. Ef she breaks her neck 'twill be her own doin's."

"Don't you consider her grown up, now?" asked the visitor, amused.

"I dunno. She seems like a little gal to me—an' I s'pose she allers will," she added, smiling at her own self-deception. "She'll allers be my pickaninny, ef she lives to be fifty. It's eight ye'r now, sence she fell out o' de top dat biggest cotton-wood. Oh, Lor', I hollered den, ef I nebber did afore!"

"You seem to have been something of a mischief," remarked the traveler, turning to Lizzie with a sparkling glance in which there was plenty of admiration; but at that instant the loss of her favorite recurred to her with renewed power, and

she rushed across the room and flung herself in Dimity's lap, hiding her face on her shoulder.

"What is it, darlin'?" asked the negress, forgetting to scold because her "darlin's" dress was so wet.

"Diamond is dead—he was murdered, auntie—shot by an arrow!"

"Who gone and done dat, honey?"

"He, auntie, he, and his Indians. They led me a race, I tell you. Poor, poor Diamond! He died in saving me."

The faithful old servant smoothed her hair, speaking as she would to a baby:

"Dar, dar; no use cryin' ober spilt milk. Dat was de splendidest beas' dat eber grew on four feet. I's right down sorry, honey, I is. If dat Rob Ruskin round yere, your pa better keep in out de fiel's—I kin tell yor dat. I wish he'd come home."

"They've gone back across the river for the present," said the girl, drying her eyes. "But, father must be careful."

"You go put on dry frock."

"Yes, I will. Hasn't father some dry garrment to lend the gentleman?"

"Dar's his blue swallow-tail in de draw. He hasn't wore dat dis ten year's—an' it's good as new, if you'll deccend to wear it while your own is gettin' dry," she said to the young man, deferentially, for his handsome face and stylish air had made a conquest of her.

"I'll be glad to wear any thing that's dry," he said. "Don't trouble yourself to get out the swallow-tail. Let me wear that 'wammus' I see hanging on the wall."

But no; he must array himself as befitted his evident rank in all the glory of the blue dress-coat with brass buttons which Dimity had faithfully defended for so many years against the moths.

"'Twill do it good to get an airin'," she said, after taking it out of an old bureau, and displaying it with much pride. "I want Mass' Doctor to wear it on Sundays an' Fourth o' Julys, but he won't. He don't like to appear sot up above his neighbors," she added, in a confidential, low voice; "he's enemies 'nuff, already, dough w'y dey hates him I dunno. He's as peaceable as a lamb, an' a gentleman of de fas' water, too, dough he

dresses like one ob dem wagabonds. Do you know him?" she asked, suddenly.

"I have never met him," was the answer. "I was a child when he left New York; but I have friends who knew him, and they wished me to look him up, while I was out here locating land. So I have made it a part of my business to find him."

"Yes, yee sah," she said, "he'll be proud to see somebody 'rom New York. 'Seuse me, I mus' go hook my pickaninny's rock," and she disappeared in a narrow bedroom sealed off one side the main room.

"I declar' to gracious, honey, dat young gentleman looks as if he'd jes' dropped out o' de Millennium," she said, in a loud whisper, quite audible in the other apartment where the young man thus complimented heard it, smiling to himself as he proceeded to array himself in the stiff and somewhat narrow-shouldered swallow-tail. "I haven't seen nuffin' so pleasant to dese ole eyes in some time, as his smile. He's perlike, too; he's got good breedin', which nobody in dis neighborhood don' know nuffin' about. I do wonder w'at he wants, an' how long he's gwine to stay. Of course he'll be here to dinner, an' I ain't made a move toward it yit. Lemme look yer frock, quick, honey, as I ha'n't had no time to stuff dem birds—not dat ole frock, chile—put on yer pink gingham, an' do fix up yer ha'r like white folks. You's gittin' ole 'nuff to be a little partik'ler when we've got company."

"Am I?" asked Lizzie, with a faint sigh, as if the responsibility was too much for her; but when Dimity had withdrawn to the little outside kitchen where she carried on her cleaning operations, the prairie-maid looked in the small cracked mirror which hung above an unpainted pine table, and smiled and blushed as well as sighed. Eagerly she looked, and long, as she had never before in her life looked, with a certain curiosity and questioning—a look peculiar to young girls when they first begin to suspect that men look on them as women.

Lizzie Dollar had already had more than one suitor—one, so mad after her that he had sworn to have her, with her consent or without it, and yet she never had looked on herself as a woman—never longed for admiration, never cared for any man but her father.

Why was it, then, that she now studied the little mirror so

earnestly? that she fastened and refastened the frill about her throat, not being able to get it to please her? that she took down and put up her hair three or four times, before she was contented with it? It never in her life took her so long to make her simple toilet.

The stranger-guest patted his foot on the floor impatiently, waiting for her to appear. When she did come out of the little room, her cheeks glowing and eyes shyly downcast, he gazed at her more steadily than he would have ventured to do had she been better acquainted with the customs of the world; nevertheless, there was nothing bold nor disrespectful in his gaze—it was only warmly admiring.

“A rose in the wilderness,” he kept thinking, marking the natural grace of her movements, to which her free, adventurous life had given a lightheartedness that was elegance, and enraptured by the constantly changing expression of her animated, intelligent face, as lovely in form and feature as any he ever had met. It was with the rapture of an artist that he observed—of a person keenly alive to all the shapes and colors of beauty, but who was too constant a worshiper at its shrine to be moved in his deeper feelings.

On the contrary, Lizzie never had seen a young man's face, before, which could make her look at it a second time; and she, stealing soft glances of pleasure at her novel visitor, felt all that was dreamy and poetic stirring sweetly in her heart. She felt it a deprivation of precious moments to go out and help Dimity about the dinner; but her duty as hostess demanded that she look after it a little, though, candor compels us to admit that the servant was no gainer by the queries and instructions of the mistress.

“You jes' go in an' min' yer business, an' yer company, —dat's all I want ob you. Don' go to spilin' yer clean dress —an' de dinner, too—interfering out here;” and Lizzie was glad to go back, albeit she could think of nothing to say to the young gentleman, who said but little to her the first few moments of her return.

Why? Not because he was lacking in that conversational talent which never is at fault for a subject, but because he had chanced on a bit of paper which absorbed his thoughts and plunged him in a reverie.

Putting his hand mechanically in the breast-pocket of the coat to draw out a handkerchief, forgetting that he was not wearing his own garment, he found no handkerchief, but a small scrap cut from a newspaper, which he had run his eye over before he thought it might be the private property of another. It read thus:

\$1,000 REWARD.—The Mayor of New York offers a reward of \$1,000 for the arrest and conviction of Doctor Bryant Lynde, suspected of being connected with the murder of Doctor Dolan. He is known to have left the city and is supposed to have fled to the West. He is a tall man, rather slender, dark eyes and hair, a slight stoop of the shoulders, left cheek burned by an explosion of chemicals, causing a pale purple scar, and speaks with a hesitation amounting almost to a stammer; is about thirty-four years of age. New York, Jan 15th, 1855.

While the stranger was pondering over this scrap of paper, now yellow with ten years' age, quite forgetful of the fair girl who sat watching his grave face admiringly, a shadow fell across the threshold, and, raising his eyes, he saw the counterpart of the person described in this paragraph, the form a little slenderer, the stoop a little more decided, the pale purple scar showing a little more plainly in the sunken cheek, the whole figure wasted and worn by ten years of such a life as but few men could endure to live.

CHAPTER III.

THE "DOCTOR."

IN his hand he carried an open basket, partially filled with plants which he had dug from forest recesses. He came into his house with a weary, indifferent sort of air, but as his eyes fell on the stranger he bowed courteously, bidding him "good-day" in a pleasant voice—a voice singular as his other characteristics, low and fine, a treble voice, full of a certain pathos and sadness. As his guest returned his greeting, Doctor Dolan, as for the present we shall call him, started and stared at him; the young man's eye sunk before his fiery gaze which

now burned upon him with intense questioning—sunk, but rose again, confronting the doctor's look with one deprecating but candid.

"May I ask your name?" inquired the doctor, setting down the basket and stepping toward his visitor abruptly, more as if he were going to commit assault and battery than as if he intended to extend a hospitable greeting.

"Certainly. But, sir, I beg of you, beforehand, not to prejudge me by that. I have come a long distance on purpose to see you, and I bespeak, in advance, a hearing. My name is Henry Deloss."

"How dare you—how dare any of that name—cross my threshold? Leave, leave, sir, this moment!"

The doctor's voice rose sharp and high; he turned deathly pale, until the scar on his cheek was a bright purple; his black eyes flashed as he stepped close to the young man with a motion as if about to strike him in the face; his tall form seemed to tower up, until poor Lizzie, who was looking on in amazement, felt herself faint with terror at this sudden scene of excitement. Henry Deloss rose to his feet, but did not shrink from the threatening of the uplifted arm.

"Let me explain myself, Doctor Lynn," he said; "do let me explain to you the errand upon which I came."

"Not a word," shrieked the other; "treacherous son of a treacherous father—if you are that man's son, as I think you are—I would not listen to you if you brought a message from heaven itself."

"I do bring such a message—at least one from the dead. I only desire to explain—"

"Go away! I will not have you here. I will not have my daughter look at you, hear your voice. The day for explanations has long since passed. I can't—I can't control myself," he added, trembling with passion, and with one furious effort of rage he pushed the young man over the threshold.

Red and pale by turns with this indignity, which he had received in the presence of the young girl, the stranger walked to his horse and stood there, hesitating. He believed that he had that to say which, if a quiet interview was granted him, would sweep away this stormy fury of the man he had traveled weeks to reach; but in his present angry mood it might

be better not to approach him; when his first surprise and anger were exhausted he might be more reasonable. As he stood there, hesitating whether to untie his horse, Doctor Dollar came to the door with a rifle in his hand, which he leveled at him, crying out to him sternly to betake himself from the premises or pay with his life for the insolence of his intrusion. The young gentleman was too brave to blanch at this threat, but he slowly unfastened his animal, resolved to await another opportunity, while the two females in the house appeared behind the doctor, Lizzie clinging to his arm and crying, coaxing and beseeching him, while he listened to her, or rather did not listen, with an aspect of stone. Old Dimity, frightened and disappointed in the anticipation of the handsome guest, for whom she had gotten up a nice dinner, appealed to her master after this fashion:

"Don' shoot, massa—don' shoot! Don' you see he got on your blue swallow-tail? Ef you should make a hole t'ro' dat, and it should be sp'iled wid blood beside, 'twould be a shame, 'twould indeed, arter my keepin' de mofs out ten long year!"

The stranger was not so disconcerted by the muzzle of the rifle pointed at him but that he took notice of this curious appeal, and bethought him to pull off the borrowed coat of his enemy, which he hung carefully on the post, and, mounting his horse, bowed deeply to Lizzie as he rode away in his shirt sleeves. Presently old fat Dimity ran puffing and panting after him with his own coat; he pulled up to allow her to overtake him, and as she stood reaching the garment up to him, he looked searchingly in her face, as he said:

"Your master is angry with me without cause."

"Bress your sweet face, darlin', I beliefs dat."

"I've good tidings for him, but he'll not hear them."

"He's in sech a rage—Is them tidin's from New York?" she asked, with a glance as keen as his own.

"Yes. Do you think Miss Lizzie wou'd consent to meet me at some appointed place? I could tell her, and she might influence him."

"Bress you, he dotes on dat pickaninny. He's as cool as ice to de hull worl' but her—~~she~~ can twist him 'round her little finger."

"Will she meet me?"

"Bress you, how can I say?"

"Will you ask her?"

"Well, yes, sence it's you, massa."

"Thank you," he said, smiling. "I shall not leave town. I will be at Hodge's grocery this evening, if you can make an errand down there, and tell me what Miss Lizzie says."

She nodded her head and hurried back.

"Oh, father, what was the matter?" pleaded Lizzie, pale and weeping, as Doctor Dollar returned into the house and hung up his rifle.

"Don't ask me. You couldn't understand it. I didn't mean to frighten you, child, but the sight of that man, the sound of his voice, maddened me."

Lizzie sat down by the small window which looked toward the village, silent and very sad. "The sight of that man, the sound of his voice," had been very delightful to her—the meeting with him the pleasantest accident of her life.

A sudden cloud had come over her sunshine. Her head ached, her limbs felt weak, a very unusual thing for her, whose high health formed an armor against fatigue or nervous ailments. But the excitements of that day had been many and intense. Her fearful flight from Rob Ruskin, her perilous voyage of the river, the death of Black Diamond, had already shaken her self-possession; but this last incident shook it still more.

Never in her life had she seen her father thus enraged. And against *him*! She did not speculate much on the cause of his rage; she only felt disappointed and lonely. Dimity came in and out, setting the table. The doctor, with hands which Lizzie could see tremble, arranged his plants, remaining very pale, with set teeth and glittering eyes. Lizzie was woe and frightened, as she stole covert glances at him.

In half an hour or so they were called to dinner.

"You do not eat, you cry," said her father, sharply, as the meal progressed; she knew that he was displeased with her, by his tone.

She might have said that he, too, did not eat; but she blushed with guilt, being conscious of regretting the lost guest, and ashamed of the excuse which now arose to her mind.

"I can't help crying to-day," she said. "Black Diamond is killed, father."

"Ha! what's that?"

"My pet is dead, father. You know I crossed the river to try and find for you the variety of the cactus which you desired to finish your collection."

"Well?"

"I rode along several miles, enjoying the balmy air, getting down, occasionally, and leading Diamond, while I looked for the cactus. All of a sudden, while I was thus dismounted, Rob Ruskin and two of his Indians rode out of a covert of tall grass and cottonwood, and were about to surround me. My back was turned; if Diamond had not given a warning neigh I should have been unaware of their intentions until too late. I gave one startled glance and leaped onto his back. Rob called out for me to surrender or he would fire. I patted my beauty's neck, I cried out to him sharply, and he sprung away like an arrow, with the three men after us. I knew I was a pretty good rider, father, and that Black Diamond was a magnificent fellow, but I had never tried myself or him so thoroughly before. It was a race—a race for life—the wide prairie and the dark, swollen river before me, and the three wretches, well mounted, behind me."

She grew pale as she thought of it, and was silent for a moment; her father looked at her with admiration and pity.

"Poor child! you must not go out for cactuses again. I did not dream those vagabonds were in this vicinity. Thank heaven that you escaped! How did it occur?"

"They were almost up with me, as I reached the river. Just as my horse took to it, gallantly, the storm came down. Did you ever see such a storm, father? The Missouri was like a sea—the waves dashed clear over me. I expected to be drowned, if I was not shot. But we got safely across. Just as we were climbing the bank, an arrow struck my poor pet; he staggered, and fell back in the river; I swam ashore. As I climbed the bluff, I saw him floating down-stream. Poor fellow! I could not stop to say good-by; the floods were still after me in the river. I ran, but I should have been overtaken, father, if—"

"If what?"

"If the young gentleman had not happened by, on the road. He took me up and brought me to the settlement."

Doctor Dollar pushed back his chair and went out of doors. It did not seem to be pleasant to him to learn that Henry Deless had assisted in saving his daughter. Lizzie pushed back her chair and began to cry again.

"'Clar' to goodness, it's time and vittels throwed away, to cook sech a dinner as dat, and nobody to tetch it," grumbled Dimity, who, according to her own assertions, *never* scolded.

"Yesterday you accused us of eating too much," rejoined her mistress, with a faint smile, trying to play that she was not crying.

"Folks's appertites allus comes in de wrong place. Yesterday dar was nuffin' but baked beans and corn-pudding. To-day dar's a fea's fit for Tanksgiving. Ef massa," looking carefully behind her to ascertain if he were within ear-shot, "ha'n't treated dat young man so bad, we'd a had somebody to 'joy it.'"

"You musn't make remarks," said her young mistress, with a manner encouraging her to still freer disclosures.

"I's got suffin to tell yer, honey, when de dishes is cl'ared away."

"Oh, dear, Dimity, tell me now. What *can* it be?"

"Oh, it's suffin' 'bout somebody. Yer mus' wait. De doctor mus'n' deserve us talkin' togedder. Ef he sees us a puttin' our heads togedder he'll suspicion it."

"Dear! dear!" sighed Lizzie, drying her tears and brightening up like a rose after a shower. "Leave that custard, Dimity; I guess I'll eat it; I feel more appetite now."

The old negress laughed softly, the oily, gurgling laugh peculiar to her.

"Cur'osity's as good as bitters," she said, tersely.

Lizzie did not mind her laughing at her; she ate the custard, went in the bedroom to look at herself in the mirror, strolled out in the yard, and picked a wild rose which grew in the grass and put it in her hair—then went back to the window which overlooked the village.

"By'm-by, when yer pa don' notice, come to de kitchen," whispered Dimity, as she carried off the last of the dishes.

In the mean time, Doctor Dollar wandered in and around and about like an unquiet spirit; he could not remain at rest a moment; finally shouldering his gun, he went off to the woods, saying sternly, as he strode away:

"If that man darkens my door, in my absence, do neither of you admit him, or speak one word with him. Do you hear?"

Lizzie nodded, and Dimity said, boldly:

"Yis, massa; be suah, we'll mind."

As he stalks off now to the woods we will take this time to inquire into his antecedents. Ten years ago that spring, a man with a child had arrived at the fort, and craved protection and keeping for a short time, until he could erect for himself a log-hut somewhere in the vicinity. At that time there was no great danger from Indians, indeed none at all, unless it might be an occasional raid from distant tribes. Other settlers were building here and there along the river-bank. The village of Jackson was "located;" two houses and a whisky-shop marked its progress.

The arrival of the emigrant, and his subsequent proceedings in building himself a house and moving into it, had nothing unusual about them.

It was the man himself who excited keen interest, and who was looked upon by all the officers of the fort as a person with a history. His name was given as William Smith. He appeared to have money, and it was evident that he was unaccustomed to manual labor. He had the habits and air of a gentleman, though singular in his speech, manner, and dress. He wore the common garb of a backwoodsman; was silent and constrained; never spoke unless first addressed, and received all attempts at friendly or confidential communication with a reserve which was impregnable.

His little girl was a very beautiful child, six years of age, blue eyes, light-brown curls, fair, soft skin, which had never evidently, been exposed much to the weather. She wore calico frocks and coarse shoes, but the two or three ladies at the fort did not fail to discover that her underclothing was of the finest quality. Good-breeding, as well as the fear of offending a man who evidently possessed a most passionate temper, restrained them from asking the child too many

questions ; and she was a marvel of discretion for her years. The secret of her discretion was that her father, whom she both loved and feared, had forbidden her to ask or answer any questions, or to prattle of her past life. Lizzie Smith was made a great pet of during the few weeks of her stay at the fort.

In a short time, her father, albeit unused to work, had laid up a comfortable log-cabin, into which they moved, with such furniture as he could purchase or extemporize. Here he took into his service a runaway slave, the Dimity who still figures in this story, and found her both faithful and efficient.

His child was made an idol of by the affectionate creature ; she was well fed and rudely dressed, and was allowed to enjoy herself in the out-door frolic and pastime to which she took as naturally as a duck to water.

The emigrant, holding himself aloof from all associations, never saw his fellow-men but under the pressure of necessity. No one knew the nature of his occupation, except that he ranged the woods and fields with a gun on his shoulder and a basket in his hand, using the more deadly weapon not half so much as the little trowel with which he dug in the earth for roots and plants. Some of the old women of the settlement began to whisper that he was a wizard, and made strange use of the things which he dug up.

People did not like him because they did not know him. He held himself aloof ; and to hold one's self aloof from ignorance, is to be disliked and suspected.

It was not known that he was a physician until he had dwelt under the shadow of the fort over two years. Then, one day, while firing a Fourth of July salute, a gun exploded, injuring several men, one, an officer, dangerously. In a day or two it was said that the army surgeon had given up the case, and the officer must die. The weather was warm, and all things were against the patient, who was rapidly sinking. The unfortunate officer was a young man, with a young wife, who was almost frantic with grief and despair. This lady, a thoughtless and pretty creature, had been especially kind to and fond of the recluse's child when she was at the fort, though the intercourse had been since broken off, by order of the father.

Hearing, by chance, of the wounded man's critical condition, the recluse went at once to the fort and offered his services as physician; he held a consultation with the regular surgeon, examined the patient, performed an operation, watched over him as nurse as well as doctor, for several days, and, to sum up, with consummate skill saved his life.

When the crisis was past he went back to his cabin, would accept no pay, no present from the captain's grateful wife, who actually hung about his neck with tears when he went away; was more retired, more sullen, and—more talked about than ever!

After that, people began to call him "the doctor;" sometimes, in cases of emergency, they would come to him and beg his services, which he sometimes gave, out of charity, never of his own desire, nor for money.

The monotonous years rolled on. The pretty child grew up into a prettier girl—a being as singular in her own way as her father was in his. There was no horse but she could ride bare-backed, no tree but she could climb, no stream but she could swim, and she could aim a rifle straight to the mark. Yet, withal, she was modest and feminine, sweet as the wild roses under her feet, and artless as the birds in the cotton-woods about her door.

The neighborhood, meantime, was growing wilder, instead of less wild. The settlers who came in were a bad class of people. They spent their time riding off on curious raids, prowling about other people's property, drinking, fighting and gambling. Many of them were the worst kind of desperadoes, outlawed from the east, seeking this new country only to pursue a career of violence and excitement.

One of the worst of these men was Rob Raskin, who was said to belong to a gang of horse-thieves, and who was known to have a band of Indians in his employ, willing to do any deed he ordered, if well-paid in whisky, powder, fire-arms or horses.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MASK RAISED AND THE VISOR DOWN.

It was but a few months after Rob Ruskin's introduction to the neighborhood that counterfeit money began to circulate freely in that vicinity. This the people had no fancy for. Little as their own lives would bear scrutiny, lawless as were many of their deeds, they had no mind to be deceived in the ever-important matter of money. When they received bags of silver dollars they wanted them *silver*, and not alloy. Rob was the object of a great deal of suspicion, of which he soon became aware, as also that he was threatened with condign punishment, as soon as the proofs were strong enough. He was as brave as he was wicked, or else he was very innocent of this misdeed. He spoke openly at the tavern and elsewhere of what was said about him; swore he would kill the first man whom he heard of as slandering him, vowed he was not afraid of all the ropes and trees and rivers and tar-and-feathers that ever were got together. He could take care of himself, and he intended to. Men better be careful what they said about him; he was not alone; if he came to harm (of which he was not afraid) he had friends who would avenge him. Stalking about in public places, with threats and taunts like these, he silenced those who yet felt quite sure he was **one of the guilty parties.**

In the mean time, the coin of the country continued to be debased in a shocking manner. Pretty soon Rob Ruskin hinted that *he* knew from whence it all emanated. What did that queer old wizard or doctor do, who shut himself up in his hut, would not look his fellow-men in the face, and had crucibles and all sorts of things in his house, which he ought not to have? What did he sit up half the night for, stirring strange mixtures in stranger pots, over a fire as hot as any demon could stir up? *He* had looked through a chink in the logs, at midnight, and seen him at work. His windows were carefully curtained, but there was a hole in the mud between

the logs, and those who wanted to, could see for themselves. What was the sneaking, stoop-shouldered, white-headed rascal doing, anyhow, among *honest men*? It was plain he had money, for he never worked. Where did he get it? As for himself, Rob Ruskin, anybody might see how he got along. If any man could beat him shuffling and dealing a pack of cards, he'd be glad to be beat. *He* lived by honest labor—the sweat of his brow—winking—and by always turning up the right Jack. As for that old Zinc Dollar, he ought to be rode out of the State on a rail.

This was the beginning of calling the mysterious recluse by that singular appellation. In less than three months he was known by no other name than Zinc Dollar. When he went to Jackson's for his groceries, all the boys called him by that name, as he passed along. If old Dimity went out with the child, she was hailed as Lizzie Dollar; yet the people admired the young girl, with mingled wonder and compassion.

"Let it go," said the doctor, when the two first complained to him of this insult. "It is as good a name as another. If a man has forsaken his own, he need not complain at any which may be given him. I like it better than Smith," with a faint, sarcastic smile.

"Bat wot does it *meen*, massa? 'T's afeard it means sartin' dreadful bad," groaned Dimity, who but dimly understood the hint thrown out by her master when he spoke of deserting his real name.

There was a good deal of shrewdness in the colored woman. She served her master all the more faithfully from her certainty that he was a great gentleman, and that it was some crushing sorrow which had driven him "into de wilderness." Cold and disagreeable as he appeared to others, she liked him very much, for he always was gentle to her, and more than gentle to his daughter. Often and often she had said to herself "dat he was de victor of some dreadful persecution, like de saints an' de colore'd folks," and all the keen curiosity of the slave-woman was on the alert for some hint of his past life. He had told her that he once practiced medicine in New York city, that his wife was dead, and that he had no friends whom he chose to acknowledge. In case of his death while

the child was young, there were writings which would instruct her what course to pursue.

"Wot does Zinc Dollar mean, massa?" she persisted in asking.

"It means that they have libeled and labeled me as a counterfeiter, Dimity. They believe that I set afloat all the zinc-filled dollars which are traveling about these parts."

"Oh, massa!" she ejaculated, turning milk-and-molasses color, "dar's no joke 'bout dat. Ef dey is in 'arnest, dey'll hang you, sartain."

"I shouldn't wonder," he answered, carelessly. "And to tell the truth, Dimity, if it were not for my little lamb, here, being left among the wolves, I shouldn't much care. It's all the justice the world has ever done me. Yes," he repeated, musingly, to himself, not her, "it is but a repetition of the past—the same old story over again. Zinc Dollar, to the last, I suppose," and he smiled a bitter smile, which made Lizzie, then a girl of about twelve, go to him and throw her arms about his neck, and look in his eyes with a fond look of sympathy for feelings which she could not understand.

As old Dimity had prophesied, there was danger in this persecution of his neighbors. Every time they called him by that ugly name they felt more certain of his guilt, and more disposed to punish him. Time and time again small parties stole to his house in the quiet hours of the night, when there was a light shining from his window, to see if they could detect him at his critical work. Time and time again they were disappointed; as each one applied his inquisitive eye to the chink in the wall, he saw, sometimes the dark, mysterious man, reading; quite as often they found him writing in a huge book, pale and abstracted, his eyes flashing as he occasionally raised them and looked before him in the air as if (according to *their* view of it) summoning spirits to converse with him. Again he would be busy gluing dried leaves and plants in another great book, and writing cabalistic inscriptions under them. That he was a wizard there was no longer any doubt—a wizard, and consequently a dangerous person, who ought to be removed from the community. He was given the hint, time and again, that his neighbors were not satisfied with him, and he had better emigrate.

Finally, one night, a party of several men, Rob Raskin among them, actually discovered him at his heinous work—melting metal to deteriorate coin, as they supposed. He had an intense fire in a small clay furnace of his own manufacture, and over this a crucible, whose contents he stirred from time to time, and which they could see to be melted metal. Stealing silently away, they soon had every man in the village out of bed, and marching, in a high state of excitement, to Zinc Dollar's cabin, to take him in the act. Rob Raskin headed the crowd, which was perfectly silent, until it had surrounded the house; then, with a wild whoop, they burst open both doors at once, and rushed upon their victim.

He turned a little pale when they first burst in, as any mortal would, to be thus surprised in the stillness of midnight, when absorbed in a quiet occupation of his own; but quickly recovering his color, confronted them coolly, as he said:

"Don't frighten my little girl to death, whatever you do, gentlemen."

It may have been habit, or it may have been policy, which caused him to call them gentlemen; at all events, it was a master-stroke, making them, for one moment of hesitation, feel ashamed of themselves. But their eyes fell on the kettle where the molten metal lay glowing and quivering, and their fury leaped up anew at the sight.

"We've caught you at it!" "In the very act!" "Bring on the rope!" "Hang him to one of his own trees!" "He's finely caught! Come on, boys!" etc., etc., etc., resounded on every side.

"What is it I'm caught at?" asked the doctor, calmly, as rude hands laid hold of him, dragging him to the front door.

"You've the impudence to ask, hev you?" said Rob Raskin, in a loud, mocking voice.

"Certainly. When a man's neighbors come in at midnight to hang him, he is likely to inquire wherein he has offended."

"Oh, come along," said Rob, dragging him by the collar; "don't waste no words. We don't intend to give you a jury trial," with a laugh, which was echoed by others.

"But why not? I'm entitled to it, whatever my crime."

"Wal, we've a shorter way out here," observed another.

Presently they had him out under one of the cottonwood

trees, with a rope about his neck. It was in vain for one man to struggle against thirty, and the doctor did not attempt it; but he said, still urgently, still with dignity:

"Don't let my little girl be a witness of this horrible scene. She, at least, is innocent, and it will blight her young years."

"Where is she?" asked Rob Ruskin, with an unpleasant laugh. "Hold on, boys, a minit. What the rascal says has ense to it."

He turned into the house, and as he entered it, met on the threshold the child of twelve, in her white night-dress, her long, bright hair streaming about her shoulders, her eyes dilated, her face pale, old Dimity, shaking with terror, endeavoring in vain to hold her back.

"I will go to papa!" was all the child said.

"Come 'long! Of course you want to see your dad strung up," said the brutal ring-leader. Catching the child in his arms, and raising her to his shoulder, he marched into the midst of the crowd, whose evil faces were now lit up by the glare of a bonfire which had been kindled. "Now, boys, we're ready. Go ahead. I'll hold the gal where she can take a good look."

When the child saw the rope about her father's neck, she gave a long, thrilling scream, and stretched out her arms.

"This is too much!" murmured the doctor.

"Not a bit," answered the savage. "It'll be good as a play to her."

"Say your prayers! say your prayers!" yelled the crowd.

Even in those frightful times they seldom "strung up" a fellow-creature without giving him five minutes to make his peace with his God.

The victim's lips moved, and in the silence which followed the child's voice, sweet and clear, rose, rapt and thrilling, to the skies.

"O, Jesus, save my dear father! Make these people sorry. They know not what they do!"—Christ's words, which she unconsciously used.

Rob Ruskin looked up. Her hands were clasped, her face lifted—it seemed to him as if he bore an angel on his shoulder—an angel in a white robe, with golden wings. A sudden

change came over his reckless mood ; he set the girl down softly, and with awe, as if afraid to touch her.

"Boys!" he said, "p'raps 'tis a little too steep to have her by. I'll take her in the house."

He went to conduct her in ; but she threw herself at his feet, clasping his knees with her slender arms so tightly that he could not free himself.

"Save my father," she sobbed.

"What'll you do for me, if I do?" he stooped and whispered ; "will you kiss me?"

"Yes," she said, and instantly her soft, innocent lips pressed his.

The crowd set up a shout ; Rob flushed to his very ears.

"You needn't make game o' her," he said. "I'm goin' to stand by her, arter her dad's out o' the way."

They shouted and jeered the more.

"Done sayin' yer prayers?" asked one of the leaders, while Lizzie clung to Rob's hand with a childish faith that he really would save her father.

"Yes," replied the doctor. "But, gentlemen, if you will allow me to argue my own case, let me ask, if you suspect me of counterfeiting, why don't you search my premises for the proofs? You have taken me in the very act, so you suppose ; you certainly have taken me by surprise. I have had no time to conceal the evidences of my guilt. I assure you that the metal in that crucible is an ore which I laid bare in pulling up the roots of a plant, which I found up in the hills. *It is silver.* I was purifying it from dross with the intention of running it into bullion, and then taking steps to make known an important discovery. One, at least, of the men I see before me, has a silver mine on his place. I, alone, know the locality. It is my secret. If I die, it dies with me, and many of you miss making your fortunes. If you do not believe me, go into my house—look—search—turn up everything. If you find any dies, any counterfeit coin, any proof whatever of my being engaged in making spurious money, I will not resist my punishment. But I don't like to die like a dog, because I have education, and know silver ore when I see it—because I go out in the fields and far over the hills to the south in search of plants, which I preserve in my

herbarium. I don't even wish to die—not in this style—because I am cross, or moody, or don't make much of my neighbors. Treat me fairly, gentlemen—that is all I ask. If I live, I shall make some of you very rich. If you kill me, you kill the goose that lays the golden egg."

His perfect self-possession, the half-humorous appeal he made to them, struck them very favorably; they could but admire the pluck of a man they had regarded as quite inferior to themselves in personal prowess; then, the hint of the silver-mine inflamed their cupidity as a torch would a dry prairie.

"You're gasing," answered one, "about that mine!" He had seen the doctor gathering plants on *his* land not long before, and why might not he be the fortunate fellow?

"At least, search my house, before you hang me."

There was a good deal of muttering as well as boisterous consultation among them; finally, five or six kept guard, while the others crowded into the house, which they dissected with a thoroughness which made old Dimity's eyes start out of her head.

"Seeh a house to put in order!" she kept murmuring to herself.

They stripped the feathers out of the ticks, rolled the potatoes out of the barrel, shook the flour out of the bag, took up the loose boards of the floor—left not a crevice or corner in attic, bedroom or kitchen which was not explored. Not a trace of guilt could be found, not a counterfeit dollar, nor a die for making them. After a time they poured out again, more quietly than they went in.

"We don't find nothing," said their leader, rather sulkily.

"Tell you what, friends," said another; "let's take that pot o' metal with us and find out what it really is. If it turns out to be pure silver, as he says, an' he'll show us the spot whar he got it, we'll let him go, scot-free. If 'tain't silver, an' he don't show us the mine 'cordin' to promise, 'twill be time 'nuff then to finish this proceedin'. What say you?"

"Agreed," said the greater number.

The rope was taken from about the prisoner's neck, he was led back to the house, a guard was stationed about it, of four men, the doors were closed, the crowd went off, carrying the

crucible with them, and in less than half an hour the doctor and his family were left to such repose as they could find, with the straw and feathers of their mattresses scattered to the winds of heaven.

The next day, a committee having reported upon the contents of the crucible, a deputation waited upon the doctor to demand that he should lead them to the mine; but he was now the obstinate one, calmly refusing to betray his secret, until a writing was drawn and signed, giving him one-tenth the profits which might accrue from working the vein. After this was settled he led the way into the "hill-country," to the spot where he had found the treasure. It proved to be an outcrop or broken "lode" of "rotten" silver. The man on whose property the vein was, was not allowed exclusive ownership in it. That was not the law in that country where rough men regulated their own affairs. Everybody "pitched in" to secure as much as possible by sturdy digging, "panning" and smelting. With that speck or vein of honor which prevails even among thieves, the doctor was paid his title by all. He was now quite a lion among them, every one felt equalized toward him, but the old name stuck to him. Zinc Dollar he was called, and ever would be, in that vicinity. He had declared that he liked it, and it was now bestowed upon him with a spirit of grim humor, and no longer intended as a term of reproach.

The vein of silver thus revealed did not prove as valuable as was first hoped. The eager diggers had exhausted it in about three months, but not before each one had made enough to keep him in funds for a year; and then, there was the excitement of being constantly on the look-out for new discoveries. That the accession to their wealth was of any permanent value to the settlers may well be doubted; even that small portion who hitherto had made a pretense of farming now rested on its laurels, content if there was enough "hog and hominy" to "keep the pot a-boiling."

It was a singular neighborhood for a man of education to remain in while his daughter was growing up to womanhood; but the doctor had rested there when he first passed in his flight from civilization, and there he remained, never apparently taking into consideration the welfare of his beautiful

child. Some strong motive must have possessed him—the shadow of a dark tragedy must lie over his life. The fire of no common spirit burned in those deep-set eyes; he was recognized to possess high qualities as a physician; all who met him felt for him an awe that was mingled of dread and admiration.

It is not supposed that he allowed Lizzie to grow up in the ignorance which shrouded the intellects of other children in that vicinity. He sent to St. Louis for such text-books as were needed, and trained her with far more thoroughness than would have been possible in any “popular” school. She was not confined to “reading, writing and ’rithmetic,” as all ordinary girls were, at that time; she could converse in French with her father, could trace the constellations, and knew more of chemistry and medicine than many a six-months’ graduate from a “course” of eastern “lectures.” It often struck even her grave father as ludicrous when he called her in from riding Black Diamond bare-back, or swinging dizzily in a grape-vine swing, to have her expound to him a problem from Euclid, or give him her assistance in a chemical experiment. Fond as she was of romping, a perfect Indian or Arab for outdoor exercises, she always brought a bright brain, exhilarated with richly-oxygenized air, to her studies.

“Did de Lord eber hear sech jargon? did de good Lord eber see sech gwines on?” old Dimity would ejaculate, retreating to her kitchen in a sort of holy horror, when the doctor and his child became excited over their lessons or experiments, and “jabbered away” in an unknown tongue, while the teacher would hold up a bone or flourish a weed, or the pupil would draw cabalistic lines on a blackboard; “I should certain be done sure afeared as massa had gone shucks wid de ole evil one hisself, ef I didn’t *know* him to be a good man. De pinkinny says she’s only a-studyin’ Deuteronomy and physi-ology—and I sure, one’s in de Bible itself, and we all needs physic when we’re sick. She’s bright, dat chile is! to tink o’ *her* hoppin’ about de trees like a squirrel, an’ den a-comin’ in an’ sayin’ over dat gibberish, like de tower o’ Babel, an’ a-hoppin’ stir dem mixtures in dat crucible. ‘Clar’ to goodness, I wishes I’d somebuddy to speak my mind to—seems as dough I’d bu’st!”

Good old Dimity would have burst before she would have relieved her teeming brain by betraying any of these curious things to the neighbors, who pryed in vain into the secrets of the household when they sought to use her as an instrument. No, great as was her natural desire for gossip, her lips were sealed when curiosity questioned her about her master.

After the affair of the counterfeit-money accusation, Rob Ruskin tried to be very good to the man he had so nearly murdered. He made all kinds of advances, which were very coldly received; in fact, the doctor did not fail to give him to understand that he knew very well who was concerned in setting the bogus currency afloat, and that it was Rob himself. Still, Rob was determined not to take offense.

The secret of this forbearance on his part was the interest he had taken in Lizzie Dollar since the night of the mob. The pure beauty of the child had made an impression upon him which he could not shake off. As he contrived to meet her again and again, he noted her rapid development into womanhood, and already he had sworn, in his heart, that as soon as she was old enough she should be his wife.

Rough, ignorant and wicked as he was, he coveted the very fairest, most delicate flower of the settlement.

As time went by, Lizzie could not row her boat on the river, go out in the woods after nuts or wild-flowers, ride her horse along the bluff, or leave the house on an errand, but she encountered Rob Ruskin. She was too childlike and too innocent to see any motive in this; to her it passed for an accident. As for her father, he was too self-absorbed; he walked amid the daily events of life like a blind man.

Supreme, therefore, was his astonishment, when, one summer day, about a year before our story commences, Rob Ruskin stalked into his cabin, and, with mingled awkwardness and defiance, asked him for the hand of his daughter. Lizzie sat in the back-door, playing with a pet squirrel, her brown hair glistening in the sun like gold, and her sweet face brimmed with nothing but mirth, until Rob had spoken "his say," and she, listening, had turned upon him an amazed look, the color in her cheeks deepening to crimson, and her eyes flashing with hardly-concealed scorn.

"Marry my daughter?" repeated the doctor, rising and

the table where he sat, busy with his huge herbarium, his sallow face turning a dark crimson, as the idea dawned slowly upon his bewildered brain.

"Yes!" cried Rob, defiantly; "one man's as good as another, in these parts, I reckon. I s'pose the gal will get married some day, and I'm the chap as is waitin' fur her. I've been dead in love with her the last two year. I kin take care o' her as well's she's been used to, I guess. I'll build a better shanty'n *this*, and I've money in bank. You know I laid up consid'able, time the mine was runnin'."

"Go out of my house," answered the doctor, angrily.

If he had used policy, as he *should* have done under the circumstances, he would have couched his refusal in milder terms, but he was so angered and outraged at the idea of *his* child—Lizzie, the sole idol, sole comfort of his wretched life—that exquisite, refined girl, that innocent child, being coveted by that coarse wretch, that he had no patience to conciliate him.

"Not 'till I git ready," said the other, coolly. "I've made up my mind to hev the gal, and when I make up my mind to a thing I usually gets it, sooner or later. You'd better think twice, Zinc Dollar, afore you say no."

"It requires no thought, Rob Raskin. Do you suppose I can mate my daughter with *you*—gambler, robber, counterfeiter—you, an ignorant backwoodsman. If your conscience was white as snow, instead of being blackened by a thousand crimes, you, nor none of your kind, could approach us. Leave us alone. Why do you wish to make association with us? We are not of your stamp. There are plenty of young women about here who would not reject your offer. Let us alone. We are not like you."

"That's jest why I take a fancy to the gal," responded Rob, with an ugly laugh. "If she was like *me*, I shouldn't want her. I guess not. Maybe I'd become a better man if I had a woman like her about my house."

"I can not talk with you about it. Please go away, and trouble us no more."

"Not by a long shot! If you don't give me the gal, I'll take her. You may bet your life on that!"

"Such threats are idle," exclaimed the doctor, rising and motioning the fellow to leave. "We do not heed them."

"The wuss for you! Remember, I've got forty Injins swore into my service. They'll do what I tell 'em."

"You threaten, do you? Then I shall inform the citizens of your threats, and call upon them to form a band in our defense."

"Let it be open war, then, if you say so." Rob went out, with a face not very pleasant to remember, throwing a mocking kiss from his hand to Lizzie as he did so.

The girl shuddered and hid her face in her hands. From that time, there had been a cloud always hanging over her—a cloud of fear. Accustomed to live out of doors, she dared not venture out of sight of the house, unaccompanied. At night, doors and windows were barred against attack, and all the weapons of the house kept in readiness to resist until an alarm could be given to the neighbors, in case Rob and his Indians attempted a raid upon the cabin.

The very day of Rob's declaration, the doctor, thinking it over, decided that the fellow's character was fully desperate enough to justify him in taking steps to protect his daughter. He therefore proceeded to the tavern, the place for all public gatherings, and there made known Rob's threats. The whole village vowed to rally to the rescue, in case of alarm; almost every man expressed his indignation, and his readiness to enter the service in defense of sweet Lizzie Diller.

"We'll duck him in the river, if he don't clear out to onest," growled more than one, but, Rob already had vanished; he had no abiding-place, only making the tavern his home when business called him to Jackson.

"It happened, also, that within a week of this occurrence, it was discovered that he and his gang had been the ones who distributed the counterfeit money so freely in that vicinity; also, that he had stolen many of the horses which had been lost by men whom he had greeted as friends. All these things aroused the fury of the community, who posted a paper through the county, offering a reward for his arrest, should he again show himself. In consequence of this, Rob Rankin had "fought shy;" only twice had he actually been seen in the county, on both of which occasions he had laughed in the faces of those who attempted to take him, and had escaped with considerable booty.

All this made poor Lizzie feel unsafe. Her long, fearless rides and walks were given up. However, as time passed on, she began to feel more assured; and not having heard, for weeks, of the outlaw being in the neighborhood, she had ventured, on the morning when our story opens, to cross the river, allured by the warmth and beauty of the May morning as well as by the desire to please her father by bringing home the cactus which he coveted.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRYST.

THE doctor had not gone many steps from the cabin, on his day of excitement, before Dimity's face reappeared from the kitchen, wearing such a shining air of delighted mystery as to be really exciting to look upon. She rolled her eyes up and rolled them down again.

"For mercy's sake, auntie, what is it? I'm dying to know."

Human nature being of about the same materials everywhere it is not surprising that poor, wild-flower Lizzie used almost the same expression which would be used by a young lady of our own day, and of the most fashionable type, under similar circumstances.

Are they not always "dying to know" about handsome and agreeable young gentlemen?

Lizzie was very good and very dutiful, but the case really amounted to a little mental disbalance on her part.

"Laws, honey, you is so disquisitive!"

Dimity's announcement was too important to be made without suitable delay.

"Oh, now, dear old auntie, don't tease me. I can't bear teasing to-day."

"Dat's so miss, sure 'nuff! You is been chased by dat Rattler Baskin, as I calls him; you is done been drowneded, and lost dat spleniferous horse, and seen your pa fly into a

passion, an' a'most kill dat nice young gentleman. If you has any nerves I should t'ink dey would be stickin' ebery way, like porkerpine squills."

"Well, now, Dimity, what is it you have to tell me?"

"Tell you? Lord bress you, honey, I 'specs I hadn't better tell yer 't all. I's libbed wid massa ten years and nebber desabed him afore; an' it's takin' an intense responsibility, to go, now, and do what he wouldn't like."

"Is it about that young gentleman, good auntie?"

"Laws, yer is *such* a chile to ast questions! Yer allers was, sence you was knee-high to a grasshopper."

"What did he say to you, auntie? Was it any thing about *me*?"

"He jes' ast me if I'd be down to de grocery this ebenin'."

"Oh-h!" murmured the young girl, in a disappointed tone.

"An' I said yes—'cos, you know, we's mas' 'out o' sugar. It *might* las' 'till nex' week; but massa needn't know dat," with a sly look at her young mistress to see how she received this first treachery toward the master of the house.

"You had better get the sugar to-night, Dimity. Then you'll be sure to have it when you do want it."

"Jus' so!" said the old servant, her hesitation done away with. "Wha' for you s'pose dat young man want to speak to *me*?"

"How can I tell?"

"Wal, he said he wanted ter see you, honey. He said he had good news for yer pa, an' if yer pa won't hear it, he can't feel easy to leave de village 'till he's made it known to somebody as is interesting in it. If you's willin' to meet him, unbeknonst to your fadder, yer mus' sen' word by me."

"Oh, auntie, would it be proper?"

"Course not, widout yer was pacted by me. I'll go 'long and keep up 'pearances. I do think yer pa was too quick, a-drivin' him off as if he was a mad dog—dar now."

"I don't understand father's conduct, Dimity. He was very angry. I never saw him so before. Perhaps I ought not to interfere—of course I ought not. Oh, I don't know what to say."

"W'at's de harm o' listenin', honey? If yer don't see no good reason for lettin' yer pa know 'bout it, arterwards, don

neber say nuffin' 'bout it. I'll be silent as de grave, I 'suro you."

"Where eal I meet him, Dimity? It is so strange to be even thinking about it."

"Nebber mind de place; we'll fix dat. Ef you say you'll meet him, we'll settle de spot, to-night, at de grocery. He seemed so sot on seein' you ag'in," continued the old woman, cunningly.

"Did he?" asked Lizzie, coloring rosily.

"Laws, yes. You made a deep depression on him; anybody could see dat wid half an eye; an' no wonder."

"I should think it was a great wonder, auntie. He has seen the world, and I am as wild as a quail or a squirrel."

"Nebber mind; 'nuff city ladies ain't got your hair, nor your eyes, nor your complexion. Howsomever, the gentleman may be married, for all we know."

"Why, so he may!" exclaimed Lizzie; "I never thought of that! Not that I care, auntie. What is it to me?"

After that she did not enter so eagerly into the conversation; she took out a bit of sewing from a little box and pretended to work, but there were long intervals between her stitches, on account of her looking so constantly out the window.

At the supper hour the doctor returned, apparently in a calmer mood, though still pale and undisposed to talk.

He told Lizzie how sorry he was that she had lost Black Diamond, and advised her to go early to bed, as she did not look well; this was the amount of his table-talk, and after tea he plunged into his books as deeply as if he had not been disturbed and shaken to the soul that day.

Dimity hurried up her work, and then came in, in a clean apron, and asked the master for some money to buy some sugar and spices.

Lizzie turned red with guilt, as Dimity asked for the money, but her father noticed nothing amiss, and gave what was desired without questioning.

When the colored woman came home with her basket of groceries, Lizzie went out to the kitchen to get a lump of sugar and a stick of cinnamon—she had a sweet tooth, like most girls.

"I'm frightened to death, auntie," she whispered. "I do wish I had not consented to your going. Of course father has reasons for his conduct, and we are plotting against him."

"Too late for repentance now, honey, as Satan sail w'en de rich man got to de internal regions. But, indeed, you isn't doin' any thing naughty. I'll go your bail, darlin'. Dat young man's a perfect seraphine; and, somehow, I feel it in my bones —"

"What do you feel in your bones, now, auntie?"

"Dat dar's a change comin', for you an' all of us."

"You have so much imagination, Dimity. You were blocked out for a poet, but never got polished up. What did the young gentleman say?"

"He hadn' no chance to say much. He come 'long behind me, as I lef' de store, and he pertended as if he weren't talkin' to me. 'What did de young lady say?' said he. 'She said she'd see you, sah,' said I. 'Good,' says he, 'when an' where?' —all de time looking up to de clouds, an' whippin' his leg wid de ridin'-whip, as if he weren't speakin' to a soul. 'We're a-goin' out to dig sassafras in de woods back o' de house,' says I, 'bont nine o'clock to-morrer mornin'. Yer must keep yer own eyes open, kase massa may be about; but if we kin git rid o' him, we will'—and wid dat he began to whistle and to turn off toward de tavern, an' if yer pa hisself had been lookin' on, he wouldn' knowed we'd spoke a word together."

"Oh, Dimity!" exclaimed Lizzie, quite breathless and pale.

"It's did, now, missa; an' ye better go to bed and get a good sleep. Ye look as if you'd been drawed through an augur-hole."

Lizzie was indeed very tired, and she soon stole off to bed; but seldom, in her brief and placid life had she passed so restless a night as followed. Remorse to think that she was disobeying her father, resolves not to keep her appointment, mingled with an intense curiosity to know what the nature of the communication about to be made to her could be, and a longing to see and hear again the face and voice she had so greatly admired, kept her awake.

"If I were not convinced that it was for dear father's real good, I would not stir a step," she soothed her conscience by repeating

Since she had grown old enough for such reflections, she had often pondered what the mystery of her father's life could be ; she felt that he was a disappointed and unhappy man, loving him with the feeling of those who have but one object upon which to lavish their affection, and knowing that he felt the same, and more, for her, she still was conscious that he was an enigma to her—that she could no more read him, than she could read Greek. That he had met with some sudden—some terrible misfortune, she knew. Her own memory retained much of her early childhood, passed among scenes far different from those surrounding her ; and most vividly did she recall the circumstances of that long and wearying and strange journey which had terminated at the fort. She had, too, a vivid recollection of her mother—a tall lady with a fair, pale face, hair the color of her own, a graceful way of walking, dressed always in silks or muslins of beautiful colors. But her father had forbidden her to speak of her mother, and she never was referred to. All these things now thronged the darkness like ghosts as the young girl lay in her bed, unable to sleep. She could not decide whether to keep her appointment ; she said yes and no a hundred times.

While she is deciding let us go back even further than to that year, 1835, when the advertisement was printed which the traveler found in the pocket of the blue swallow-tail.

Several years prior to that, two young gentlemen, warm friends in college, pursued the study of medicine, and graduated together. Both belonged to good families in New York, and began the practice of their profession under favorable auspices ; they formed a partnership, and strong in the prestige of their families, and in the reputation for talent which they already had acquired, they set up their office without getting under the wing of some old and established physician, as is often done. All, seemingly, went well with them. The first season of their partnership, one of them, Bryant Lynn, married the cousin of the other, a very beautiful girl, and he married her, knowing that his partner was also in love with her. But, Dr. Lynn did not believe in cousin marrying ; and if Isabella Deless preferred him, as she evidently did, he saw no reason why he should deny himself

and her a life of happiness, although truly grieved that Henry should have been a suitor for the lady's hand.

"He will see some one else, soon, whom he will fancy more," he said to himself; "it is not so much real love that he feels for Isabella as it is the attachment resulting from long association. They have passed their lives together, and he is fond of her—but it is not *love*—like my love!"

Henry spoke to him very frankly about his superior success, wished him joy, and said that he, of course, should have now to wean himself from his boyhood's fancy.

"My first love," he said, lightly; "may it not be my last! It's curious, though, Bryant, that she prefers you to me."

"Why?"

"Well, I'm far the handsomest man, and I've the readiest wit, two advantages which usually tell with the fair sex. But then, you have the most money and the best reputation for sound talent."

"Upon my word, you are very candid!"

"Pardon me Bryant, I was jesting, as usual; my tongue is an unruly member, as you long ago found out. Of course you know, and she knows, and everybody knows that you are the most worthy of Isabella." The young man, laughing, went out.

But, his words were not forgotten by the other. Doctor Lynn was naturally quiet and reserved; with him, "still waters run deep." He knew that he was deficient in those graces which recommend men to women. As his friend left him, he arose and went to the little mirror back of the office to look at the scar on his cheek. In a moment, as it were, he became jealous and unhappy. Could it be that Isabella was marrying him because he was richer than her cousin, and because he had a reputation for originality in his profession? Did she love one partner, yet consent, from ambitious motives, to marry the other?

He fretted himself a good deal with foolish questions like these. However, the marriage took place, and Henry Deloss was groomsman at the wedding of his friend.

Within a year Deloss also married a dashing heiress, a black-eyed, high-tempered woman, the opposite of his first love. Time passed smoothly on; Doctor Deloss was the first to be

blessed with a child—a son. It was several years before Bryant had an heir, a daughter. In the mean time, unpleasant relations arose between the partners; their friends did not understand why they should quarrel; but, quarrel they did, and to such an extent as to dissolve partnership and break off the friendship between the two families. The only inkling of the cause of disagreement which could be had by others, came from Doctor Deloss's wife. In her high-tempered, passionate way, she allowed it to be understood that both herself and Doctor Lynn were jealous of the cousins. This made a great deal of scandal among their acquaintances. The Lynns bore themselves as if quite unaware of it. Doctor Lynn was a rising man, while Deloss only maintained a mediocre position.

Finally, Mrs. Lynn was taken ill; she had long suffered from a decline which no change of air or treatment could arrest; now her malady rapidly increased, and she was pronounced incurable by the able counsel called by her husband.

In her dying hour she summoned Bryant to her, and whispered a communication which sent him from the room, pale, and agitated almost to convulsion.

It was a week after the funeral that the widower called, for the first time in three years, upon his whilom friend and partner, the cousin of his lost wife. The office of the latter, at that time, was a room on the first floor of his own dwelling. Doctor Lynn came to see him in the evening, at seven o'clock, staid about half an hour, and went away. At nine o'clock some member of the family went to his office, and found Doctor Deloss dead upon the floor, with one of his own surgical instruments buried deep in his heart.

Was it a case of murder or suicide? The servant who waited in the hall, and who dismissed Doctor Lynn, deposed, at the inquest, to having heard loud and angry discussion between the two men, but he had distinguished nothing of what was said.

When Doctor Lynn went away, his host did not follow him to the door; indeed, the witness could not aver that he heard sound or movement in the office afterward, until Mrs. Deloss went down to ask if her husband was in.

There certainly was reason to suspect Doctor Lynn of having committed violence on the man with whom he had quarreled; still, had he met the emergency bravely, and defended himself skillfully, he might have come out of the trial exonerated by the community. As it was, when the officers of justice went to his house to arrest him, he had fled, taking with him his child, and such jewelry and money as could be carried on his person. This step, of course, at once convicted him, in the minds of the community, of the murder. A storm of indignation arose against him at the dastardly deed. A reward was offered for his arrest; and it was confidently expected that, his flight being burdened by the addition of his child, he would be overtaken. The widow of the murdered man was the object of universal compassion and sympathy.

Weeks and months fled, and it became certain that the murderer had escaped, at least for the present. The excitement gradually died out, as all excitements will, especially in a large city, where one treads so closely upon the heels of another. Mrs. Deloss had a large fortune of her own, and after a suitable period of retirement, she gradually recovered from the shock of the tragedy which had widowed her, and mingled again in the society where she always was welcomed on account of her elegant dressing and high spirit. Here, too, a fine boy, "the image of his father," was sent away to school, and the widow enjoyed herself really as well as in the days of her early triumphs.

In the mean time, the outcast man of the world, on whose arrest a price was set, far from the scenes of his youthful association, was living a desolate, forlorn life, under an assumed name. Naturally of a sensitive and jealous, if not of a morose disposition, the harrowing circumstances connected with the death of his wife, and the sad events which followed were poor memories upon which to feed his solitude. It is not known whether or not he knew that the city press had openly published the accusations of some, that he had not only murdered the man of whom he was jealous, but had slowly poisoned his own wife to death!

This was the man to whom his gentle, innocent child looked up with such love and deference. Indeed, she had no

reason not to love him. To her he was a fond father, tender, if gloomy; always ready to instruct her, to soothe her when ill or weary, if not playful as were some.

It was by accident that Lizzie had learned that her father's real name was Bryant Lynn. She had seen him write it, a great many times; and, one day, he mechanically signed it to a note which he gave her to take to the store. She called his attention to it, and when he snatched the paper away, and threw it in the fire, it was too late, the name was indelibly written in her memory, and she knew it was *his true name*. whatever might have been his reason for abandoning it.

When the stranger first told her that he was in search of Bryant Lynn, she had spoken without reflection, in the surprise of the moment. It is a question whether, otherwise, she would have betrayed her father without his permission. Having once been guilty of the slip of the tongue, she felt that it would appear suspicious for her to retract what she had said; and, indeed, the traveler was so pleasant, with such an honest, frank eye and smile, that she could not believe she had done harm.

When her father met him as he did, she had regretted her imprudence. Yet she had not more than half regretted it—she could not—no, not if she suffered ever so much for it! To see the stranger and speak with him again, to know that he lingered in the village, that perhaps circumstances would lead to his stopping there some time—the promise of this filled her with a joy which she did not understand. Joy and remorse, battling together, contrived pretty effectually to keep her awake that night.

If we dared to whisper it thus early, we should let it be known that beautiful Lizzie Dollar had “met her fate,” that she, too unsophisticated to give her feelings a name, was ready, at the slightest encouragement, and perhaps without it, to fall in love with the young traveler.

CHAPTER VI.

"DONE GONE."

As the hour of nine approached, on the following morning, a curious scene occurred in the forest which belted the corn-field back of the doctor's cabin. A young man entered the woods at a spot half a mile above the house, and having gone in deep enough to be secure of observation from the road or cabin, he walked leisurely along, listening to the singing of the birds and occasionally gathering a wild rose or violet, a knot of which he placed in the buttonhole of his coat. His handsome face appeared as if any moment it might break out into a smile, from natural pleasantness of disposition, but it grew more and more grave as he approached the rendezvous where he hoped to meet the doctor's daughter. He was not so much thinking of the girl as of the communication he had to make. Accustomed to the society of elegant as well as beautiful women, presented to him adorned by all the charms of cultivation and of fashionable dress, it would have been marvelous if Henry Deloss had been much affected by the loveliness of the young girl whose acquaintance he had made the day previous. Still, he felt a great interest in her, as the daughter of the man to see whom he had been sent so far, and to whose name he had attached such frightful associations. As the child of this man he was interested in her; and he had, too, been charmed and attracted by her lovely accomplishments, so different to any he had imagined as befitting young ladies. He smiled as he recalled her feats of swimming and horsemanship, yet he could think of nothing to condemn, not a bold look, not an ungraceful movement. The antelope was not more graceful in its motion than this young girl; the rose he held in his hand was not sweeter than her cheek, the violet not more modest; and, within, there was intelligence in the luster of her sparkling eye which told of a warm heart and active mind. Of course he was ignorant of the fine education the cabin-reared child had received, but he had been annoyed by no uncountness of speech or manners.

"How pretty she is! how vivacious! how intelligent! what a pity that she should have been consigned to this secluded life—should have been snatched away from all the pleasures and associations which were her's by right. And for no fault of her own—nor *his*! How strange it is that such wrongs are permitted to go unrebuked by Providence. What a life that man must have led! Oh, mother!"

He paused in his walk, and with a clouded countenance picked to pieces the flowers in his hand. After a few moments, recovering his equanimity, he resumed his walk. Around his hat was a wide band of crape.

When he came opposite the doctor's house, he first scrutinized the surrounding fields, and seeing nothing of the doctor in that vicinity, he went a little deeper into the wood, and finding a mossy log, sat down to wait.

But the young eastern traveler was not the only occupant of the wood that morning. Scarcely had he left the tavern at Jackson's and struck into the forest, then he was followed, step by step, by a dangerous-looking fellow, whose actions in thus silently and secretly dogging him, could mean no good.

From tree to tree, silent and fierce as the panther, crept the unseen follower. He was a man not more than twenty-five, powerfully built, sunburned, with long hair and untrimmed beard, dressed as a hunter, with a brace of pistols in his belt, and a rifle in his hand. The reader will recognize him as Rob Ruskin, who, with the mingled cunning and audacity of his nature, furious at having been thwarted in his designs on Lizzie Dollar, had crossed the river in the night, and was hovering in the vicinity ready for any circumstance which might throw her in his power.

Cowering under the tavern bar-room window the previous evening, he overheard the idlers there discussing the event of the previous day, cursing him "up-hill and down," and swearing among themselves that if Rob ever laid a finger on Zinc Dollar's daughter, they'd burn him at the stake if they had to search for him a year. Rob grinned sardonically as he heard this threat, making up his mind that "he'd show 'em." To threaten *him* was to offer him a great inducement to accomplish the thing denounced. He heard them descanting on the stranger, who happened along in time to rescue the

girl, and how he had said that his business at Jackson's was partly to see old Zinc Dollar as well as to locate land.

From their gossip, Rob made him out to be young, good-looking and pleasant—a city chap, a “dandy,” who probably had money. This fired his jealousy. To think a chap like this had rescued Lizzie Dollar, made him tremble with rage. He resolved to make that neighborhood too hot to hold him before he should have time to practice his fascinations on her.

When he followed the unsuspecting traveler into the woods he did it, at first, with a motive which he afterward changed. Rob, bad as he was, seldom committed a downright murder upon an unoffending person; he thought to waylay and rob the young gentleman, and to give him warning that if he staid about Jackson's twenty-four hours longer, he must look out for himself. He supposed the stranger's object in seeking the forest was to examine the land; but when he found that the other paid no attention to the land, but took a straight course for the doctor's, he began to suspect the truth—that he was keeping a secret appointment with the young girl. Of this he became convinced when he saw the traveler taking his observations on the surroundings and seat himself to wait the arrival of the other party. In his prejudiced mind Rob could put but one construction on such a proceeding. Every wild passion of his nature was aroused.

To one who could have taken in all parts of the scene at once it would have been one of painful and indescribable interest. The stranger sat on the mossy log, mingled sunshine and shade flickering pleasantly over him; he had taken off his hat, about which he idly twined a vine which he had pulled from the moist ground beside the log. Although his face was grave, even anxious, he hummed a song to himself, softly, and the bouquet in his buttonhole gave him a lady's look. So often did the light of heaven fall upon a nobler and more agreeable figure. Unwarned by any near approach of danger, he sat there, dreaming not of the dark figure crouched in a clump of bushes, a little to one side, through the parted stems of which glowed a face consumed with contending passions. The black eyes shone like the orbs of a wild animal seen in the dark; the teeth were set, the whole expression full of deadly resolve, mingled with a grim

satisfaction at beholding the innocent air of the man he watched.

Nothing could have been easier than for Rob Raskin to have killed Henry Doss as he sat there, humming his song; but the outlaw was restrained by another purpose. Unfortunately (in his view of the case) he had no knife with him, having lost his in crossing the river the previous evening; and to fire a pistol then would be to warn away the approaching girl who was to be his other victim.

But these two persons, in such frightful juxtaposition, did not form all the actors in the forest-scene. Nearly a quarter of a mile farther back in the wood, in a small hollow which formed an admirable covert, were stationed six of Rob's Indians, all well-mounted and well-armed, and taking charge of the horse of their leader. These braves had crossed with him the night before, and had been placed in the wood with the purpose of abducting Lizzie Dollar the first time she should be found in the adjacent fields or forest. Her brave escape had so exasperated her outlaw lover as to determine him to this desperate proceeding. He really loved Lizzie, according to his character, with a wild, determined passion, which he could not, and did not, try to subdue. He had no idea of injuring her further than frightening her into becoming his wife, which he knew he could do, if he could once get her into his hands. His reasoning did not extend into the future, to the unhappiness which must result from such an ill match—the amount of his argument was this—he loved Lizzie Dollar, and was willing to settle down and be a good husband; if he could get her; therefore, she ought to, and must marry him. He would murder her, before he would give her up to any other man.

Feeling thus, it might be expected that teeth and eyes would glitter like those of some savage animal, as he crouched low, gazing upon his supposed rival—noting his handsome face, white hands, fine clothes, all failed to feed his burning jealousy.

He thought, with a dark triumph, of the fleet horses and eager Indians who watched and waited but a little space from him. He would not kill the man and wait another opportunity of securing the girl. It would suit him better to snatch her away from the arms and eyes of the new lover, and bear

her off in a whirlwind of triumph. She should marry him, now ! there should be no "let-up" on that decision.

Every faculty sharpened in the excitement of the hour. He knew that in a settled district like that, his savages might at any moment be discovered in their lurking-place and the alarm given. He glanced uneasily about him, wishing intensely that the girl would make her appearance before any thing happened to mar his plot. As she was not yet in sight, he crept back to his confederates, running, as soon as far enough away, and held a brief consultation with them, ordering them to approach as near as they dared to the spot where the stranger waited. Then he made two of the men dismount, give their horses in charge of the others, and go back with him.

Softly as cats the three then returned and reconnoitered the ground. As they secured crouching-places from which they could see and not be seen, two persons entered the wood and came slowly forward ; leading the way was old Dinity, holding up her finger and making gestures of warning, as if her young charge, by stepping on a twig, might betray her purpose and whereabouts to the doctor, busy with a case to which he had been called in the village.

Behind her came Lizzie, swinging her sun-bonnet in her hand, approaching with a hesitation not natural to her, and blushing deeply as she saw the stranger, who arose and went forward two or three paces to meet her.

Rob Ruskin strained eye and ear, his veins swelling as he marked the blush on Lizzie's countenance, which had never worn such an expression for him. He heard the negress say

"Dar, massa, here she is. I's kep' my promise, anyhow. But she did hol' back, at de las', as skittish as a young colt as fust feels de halter. I 'clar' to gracious I t'ought I'd have to get a stick o' peppermint an' hol' it afore her nose to draw her 'long in de right c'ection. You see, massa, she's afraid she ain't a-doin' as she oughter ; an' her pa'll be so offensive when he fin's it out."

These words confirmed Rob in his previous suspicions. It was very evident that this was a clandestine interview of a pair of lovers. The stranger took the young girl by the hand, and seating her on the log, placed himself so near that he could talk to her almost in a whisper. Old Dinity, looking

as wise as an owl, went to work with a pickaxe which she had brought along for an excuse, to dig for "sassafras."

Presently her broad back was turned upon the young couple; the stranger talked rapidly to his companion, but Rob could not understand what was said. The two, sitting on the log, were half turned from him; he could read every feature of Lizzie's absorbed, eloquent face, for her bonnet was in her lap; the head of the other was bent toward her, as he conversed. Rob gazed upon the pretty picture a short time as if on purpose to exasperate himself. Then, with a silent signal to his companions, the three sprung forward; and before they were aware of danger, a handkerchief was bound over Lizzie's mouth, and she was lifted in the hated arms of Rob Ruskin, while her despairing eyes, looking backward, beheld her new friend upon the ground, his mouth stuffed with grass, and his arms being pinioned by two savages.

In his plan of attack the outlaw had not reckoned upon old Danny; her presence somewhat marred the plot, but as her back was still turned, and no noise had been made, they thought to get away without alarming her. Their purpose, in this was to save as much time as possible, before the alarm should be given. Every moment was of value. If they could have a quarter of an hour to themselves, they would easily paralyze. They knew well that the whole country would be aroused, and join in the chase, as soon as men could catch their weapons and mount their horses.

Rob Ruskin had a great deal of cunning. In the plans which he had made, on this occasion, he developed plenty of it. All of those plans are not yet apparent. If it had been necessary for the success of the abduction, he would have ordered the young man and the old woman shot at once. But he did not desire to attract attention by firing. Silence was of the utmost importance. So quickly, so audaciously, and so skillfully had the attack been made, that not a single outcry was possible to either of the prisoners.

But, though his mouth was gagged and his arms grasped by two powerful fellows, after the first second of surprise Henry Dimes resisted to the best of his ability the attempts made to murder him. He struggled desperately, moved by

the sight of Lizzie's abduction, but a fine, strong rope of twisted leather was about his arms, binding them to his side; and when this was accomplished, his feet were the next object of attention.

At this instant Dimity slowly raised herself and looked around. The pickax fell from her hand, her eyes distended until they looked like hard-boiled eggs with black yolks, her lips dropped apart and her face turned gold-color.

The two Indians, while binding the young man, kept an eye on her; they saw that she was about to scream, and one of them, leaving Deloss to the tender attentions of his mate, sprung upon the old negress with one bound.

"Don't cry, or me kill!" he said, his hand on her mouth.

The faithful creature, mortally afraid of the "red debbils" as she was, was quite ready to be killed in the cause of her young mistress. With a sudden snap she bit the Indian's hand, and as he withdrew it, gave a loud, piercing scream, cut off in the middle by a blow which laid her on the ground, seeing stars, and forgetful of what brought her there.

Meanwhile, Deloss, with only one savage to cope with, helpless as he was by reason of his arms being bound tightly to his side, in that minute which had been absorbed by Dimity, kicked his antagonist in the face with a blow that broke his nose and blinded him, struggled to his feet, and with a thrilling shout which was heard for half a mile about, started after the running outlaw, who, burdened as he was by Lizzie's weight, could not make full time. He had not gone a rod before he caught his foot in a creeper and fell to the ground, unable to break the force of the fall by stretching out his arms. He was up only in time to elude the grasp of the savage who had disposed of Dimity.

"Shoot! kill him!" shouted Rob, looking back; "they have given the alarm, and we might as well make short work of it."

The Indian leveled his gun, but Deloss dived behind a tree. It was now a game of dodge. The other savage, furious with pain, wiping the blood from his eyes, rushed up to join in the play. The young man, for a novice, behaved with wonderful skill. He drew the fire of both, and was still unharmed, now running in a half-circle to get back to Dimity

who had risen to her feet, and was trying to get breath enough for another scream, the wind having been knocked out of her by her fall. While the Indians were loading and pursuing, the white man reached her, and ordered her behind a tree.

She obeyed, in a dumb stupor.

"The ax," he cried; "cut the thongs."

Old Dinty's scattered wits rallied brilliantly, at the order; as quickly as the "spryest" girl could have done it, she seized the pickax and severed the rope. Then Deloss gave a whoop of exultation which would have done credit to the savages, and bounding forward, a pistol in either hand, he shot the foremost Indian, who fell, and did not rise. The other turned and ran in the direction of the ambuscade; Deloss did not fire at him, he had but a single shot, and that he reserved for the second one who had dragged away the girl.

Old Dinty now joined in the race. Panting and blowing she tumbled after the disappearing party, crying, at intervals:

"Bring my child back, Robber Raskin; bring her back, I say. If ye wants to kidnap anybuddy, take me. I's cullud, an' usen to it. I's been kidnapped afore, but my poor pickaninny! bring her back, I say.

"Oh, Lor!", she groaned, when breath and legs gave out, sitting down on the earth and spreading out like an overgrown turtle, in a yellow circle, "w'at'll massa say, now? An' it's all my doin's—all my doin's! I 'sueded her to come, ag'in' her own min', and now she's los' an' stole and run away wid. Oh, w'at a born fool I is! Here I's been a-chasin' dat robber, whom I couldn' no more coitch 'an I could a wil' turkey, 'stid o' runnin' t'odder way and lettin' massa know w'at's up."

This reflection urged her to renewed effort in a different direction; after three or four mighty trials she succeeded in raising herself again to her feet, and set off in a distracted trot toward home. She had gone but a little way when she met Doctor Diller, with his gun, running to ascertain what was the matter up. Hearing the young man's shout, followed by Dinty's scream, as he was returning leisurely from the village, his ears were aroused; but whether it was some prowling bear, or some still worse peril which called forth the alarm he could not guess.

The thought of Rob Ruskin's exploit of the previous day filled him with terror; running to his house, he snatched his gun, and set off, by the nearest route, for the forest. He was not the only person who heard the screams, and knew that something was wrong. Two or three other men joined in the chase, but they were far behind, and unarmed, except with their pocket-knives. The idea of each was that some wild animal had approached too near the settlement.

"What is it?" shouted the doctor, coming in sight of Dimity. "Is it a bear? Where's Lizzie?"

"She's jus' done gone, massa," panted the negress, again sinking down, now that the one she sought had arrived on the scene.

Gone?—how?"

Dimity could not speak; she pointed in the direction taken by the others. A cold sweat broke out on the doctor's forehead, two images presented themselves to his mind's eye; one, of his beloved child being torn to pieces by a wild beast, the other of her having fallen into the clutches of the desperado who had so long threatened and tormented her.

"Speak," he cried; "gone where?"

"Dat Robber Ruskin done got her, dis time," groaned Dimity.

The father waited for no particulars; following the motion of her hand, he bounded on with long strides like an Indian's, leaving the negress clasping her knees and rocking herself moaning, in a sort of sing-song measure:

"It's all my doin's—all my doin's—all my doin's."

As the doctor ran, he heard a pistol and two or three rifle shots which served as a guide, for he could see nothing of those in advance. The sound quickened his already great exertions; but when he reached the little valley it was only to see six horsemen galloping off through the forest, to catch a glimpse of the pink dress of his daughter among them, and to trample over a wounded man. He looked down—it was Henry Deless! With an expression of surprise and anger he started back.

"Don't mind me," said the young man. "Pursue them, before they get too far away."

"How came you here?" asked the other, roughly. "Were

you in league with that fellow, after all? It would be like the blood—treacherous! If I thought you were, I would finish you up.”

“I tried to save her, Mr. Lynn. I did all I could. Oh, to make haste! See, there is a horse!”

Truly, in their anxiety to be off, and in the excitement DeLass had raised by firing into their midst, they had left the animal of their fallen comrade still tied to a tree.

“Take my pistols,” continued the wounded man; “you can load them as you ride. I’m quite certain I put a bullet through that white rascal.”

“I hope to God he did,” muttered the doctor, taking the pistols from the other’s side, and hastily untying the horse. He would not address his hope, personally, to the youth, nor thank him for his weapons or his suggestions, which he accepted only because his daughter’s happiness was at stake. He could not, would not pause to ascertain if the young man was dangerously wounded; his daughter was the world to him, and Henry DeLass a reptile he would as soon as not crush. Mounting the horse he rode away, and as its hoof-beats grew fainter in the distance, the wounded man gave over effort, and became insensible.

CHAPTER VII.

OLD DIMITY’S CHARGE.

Just before nightfall of that same day the women, children and old men of Jackson’s were startled by a strange apparition. All the strong men of the village were on the war-track, consequently these helpless ones whom we have mentioned were the only persons to witness the occurrence. Robt. Raskin and his dusky suite rode audaciously through the long street, whistling, yelling and brandishing their weapons with jeers and laughter. They even went so far as to stop at the tavern, frighten the boy in charge out of the freedom of the bar, at which they helped themselves, as also to all the food

in the kitchen, and rode off again before men enough could be summoned to prevent them. Lizzie Dollar was not with them. The women set up a wail at this, making sure that she had been ruthlessly murdered. The landlady had the courage to demand of Rob what he had done with her; he answered only with a laugh.

She noticed that he was very pale, and that his clothing, on the right side, was soaked with blood. She then asked him if he was hurt; he laughed again, and took a glassful of raw whisky.

"Look a-here," said he, as he climbed onto his horse with a difficulty which convinced her that he *was* hurt; "did I fix his gun-flint for that city chap?"

"I ain't sartain," replied the landlady. "He's tad, but he ain't dead yit."

"Well, I wish he was. I owe him some. If he don't die, as he oughter, I'll pay it yit. Hurrah, my braves! There's a few volunteers crowdin' up a leetle too close. Let's git out o' this."

And with more yells of defiance, the band rode off in plain view of a party of ten or fifteen men who had kept on their track, and were now entering the village.

Knowing they would have time to get out of rifle-shot before their pursuers reached them, the band then rode to the river-bank and urged their horses into the stream. As the red light of sunset struck the opposite shore, they formed a line along it, waiting to find if their adversaries thought of crossing. This, of course, it would be folly to do, at that spot, as the desperadoes could fire upon them to the best advantage should they attempt to follow; and there was nothing more for the citizens to do but to rest and refresh themselves, await the return of their comrades, form a company, elect a captain, and go to work systematically to outwit or hunt down the outlaws.

The best thing, now, about the affair, was the certainty that Rob was across the Missouri, and the girl was not with him. Whether he had left her with confederates for the purpose of throwing them off the scent, or whether she was foully murdered, was the question which agitated the community. There was no idea of abandoning the search for

Lizzie, or her corpse, a single hour. Only to rest or change their horses, and to snatch a meal themselves, did the volunteers pause. Fortunately it was a brilliant, moonlit night; the river shone like a sheet of silver; even the forest was not entirely dark. A patrol was stationed for several miles along the bluff to give the alarm in case Rob Ruskin attempted to return that night. Some thought he had left the girl in the care of confederates, to be secretly conveyed across in a skiff during the small hours of the night. It was resolved to keep so close a watch as to prevent such an attempt from being successful. The soldiers stationed at the fort were called upon and received permission from their commander to join in the search, with orders to shoot the Indians concerned in this outrage, they having violated treaty laws, and made themselves liable to such punishment.

"A purty kittle ob fish," growled Dimity, as she moved about restlessly, waiting for her master's return. "An' its no dat got 'em all in it. Ef I hadn't done persuaded her to go out dar, dis couldn' 'a happened. 'Cos why: she wouldn' been out dar, an' if she hadn' been out dar, he coul'n' sweep down on her like a hawk on a chicken. Ef I hadn' gone to dat grocery-store, an' got sugar w'en I di'n' need it, I shouldn' seen him, nor hear'd him, nudder, an' he'd 'a gone away dissatisfied, an' saved his own life, an' massa's, an' dat darlin' child's, an' eberybody's—even poor ole Dimity's. For I shan't never get over dis. I feels it in my bones. 'Tain't no use fer dat red nigger knock me down an' jounce de bread out my ole baddy; 'tain't cause fer I runned so hard, my heart's been a jumpin' like a frog in a well eber sence—not even 'cause I was skeered out o' my senses an' got de palliation of de heart awful. I don' min' dem. But my poor pickaninny! It's done killed me to t'ink my bad advice has brought dis yer trouble onto her. Don' I wish I had a blood-hound, es' to set him off on de scent o' dem red niggers? Oh, Lordy! I do wish massa would come in. I've got his c'fere really. An' dat poor young man will sartingly perish for de want of a good doctor. I don't t'ink much dat army surgeon. He's fix'd him up for dis present, but massa'll have to do it eber. I wishes dat young man would come to his sense. I can't do nuffin for a body as is in a constant faint.

De experience ob dis day beats all—even de day when I done got religion, and de day I runned 'way from t'uther massa."

Going into the little bedroom, she took another look at the pale face lying with closed eyes on the pillow, and forced a spoonful of brandy into the mouth, as the surgeon had ordered. It was swallowed mechanically, the eyes not unclosing, and scarcely a hint of life being given.

"He'll neber get ober dat," sighed Dimity, leaving him and going, for the hundredth time, to the outer door, to listen for her master.

"*Dar he comes!*" she cried, a moment later, as she heard the sound of a weary footstep approaching; and, with the conviction that she was about to face her master, she dropped into a chair as if she had been shot. "I wish some mountain would jes' be good 'nuff to fall on my cranium, as de doctor calls it," she whispered; "I don' like to meet him, knowin' I's de cause of all."

The doctor came in, haggard, his clothes torn by furious riding through wood and underbrush, evidently so fatigued as hardly to be able to move.

"Brandy!" he said, sinking into the first chair he met.

"Has you any tidin's?"

"None—none at all. I have just heard that Rob is on the other side of the river, and that my child is not with him. He has murdered her, no doubt."

His face fell on his hand, and he remained thus, unminuteful of the glass which Dimity held for him.

"Here, massa, do take suthin'. I's got coffee on de stove."

Raising his head, he drank down the contents of the glass; as he handed it back, the black eyes, which had always so much of power in them, fixed hers, as he asked:

"What were you and Lizzie doing in the forest this mornin'g? Did you go out there to meet the man I drove from my door yesterday?"

Dimity's knees shook so that they knocked together; but she had no idea of denying the truth, and said, humbly:

"We did, massa doctor—we did; 'twas all my fault. I coaxed my poor pickaninny into it. She hung back all de time, but I s'pected he'd tell us some mighty good news, an I took de 'sponsibility—"

"Encagh. What has happened to-day is the meet punishment for such disobedience. I am done with her. Let her fate be what it will, I give her up. Give me something to eat."

Dimity's very soul shrunk up within her to hear such words as those from a man whom she knew had idolized his daughter beyond any common stretch even of parental feeling. They were said so quietly that they fell with awful power. He got up, hung up his rifle, took off his coat, bathed his face and hands, and sat down to the table to await the appearance of the coffee, as calmly as if the dearest half had not just been torn from his grieving heart. Dimity had often stood in an awe of her master which amounted to fear, but she never before trembled as now.

"Lord have mercy on poor ole brack Dimity, an' git her safe out o' dis pickle-tub, an' she'll never jump in anodder," she groaned, as she hastened to the kitchen for the coffee. "Ef he feels dat way toward her, what'll he say w'en he fin's dat very man in his own bed, in his own bedroom? He'll kill him, w'at bress of life is lef' to kill. Oh, w'at a muss I's made of it! An' he's disowned dat poor, murdered chile," and she burst into tears; but, as this was no time for indulging in the "luxury of tears," she wiped her ebony cheeks on her sleeve, and hastened back with supper.

The doctor helped himself and began to eat. There had always been an excess of the stoic in him, and if the food choked him now, and lay like a stone in his stomach, an observer could not have told but that he enjoyed it.

"What's that?" he asked, as a faint groan came from the bedroom.

"It's dat meddlesome cat," said Dimity, passing him the bread with a shaking hand.

"Deuced queer cat," muttered the doctor, as the sound was repeated.

"Try some dat chicken, massa, do!" exclaimed the colored woman, rattling the plates together to hide the noise, while her countenance, if he had looked up, would have been found to wear a curious expression of fright masked with indifference.

"Oh, if I could on y git him out de house, 'long nuff to get

some o' de neighbors to take dat poor young man to de tavern, I wouldn' min'," she was thinking. "Dey no bus'ness to bring him here. I did all I could to prevent it; but kase dis was de neares' house, and kase a doctor libbed here no place would do but dis. An' now dar'll be more trouble."

"Do go and see what's got into that bedroom," said the doctor. Dimity obeyed him with alacrity; she had been longing to go in and give the patient his brandy, which was due, and to see if she could not stop his moaning; she found the young man with his eyes wide open, apparently conscious; she gave him the stimulus, and as he was about to speak she stooped and whispered:

"Don' speak fur yer life. De doctors say you mus'n' try to talk—you mus'n' even *groan*. I's berry busy jus' now, but I'll be back purty soon, an' 'tend to you. Don' yer stir, unless you's made up yer mind to die."

"Well, what was it?" asked the doctor, who seemed to have had his suspicions aroused.

"I reckon 'twas the wind a-risin', massa; der window's open."

Presently he pushed back his plate and arose; he went toward the bedroom.

"Hark!" cried Dimity, in despair; "wasn' that somebody a-hollerin'?" opening the outer door as she spoke.

Her master came away from the bedroom to listen with her.

"I hear nothing."

"I does, massa. Dar's men comin', anyhow."

And there was, much to her relief, for if the discovery of the presence of the man he hated in his house had to be made, she wanted persons present who could prevent violence. Some of the neighbors hearing of the doctor's return had come to consult with him about the night's duty.

"Do what you please, friends," said the doctor. "For my part, I'm going to bed. I've no doubt the gal is married, and your trouble will be thrown away. At all events, I'm done with her."

They stared at him in astonishment.

"Don' mind a word he says," cried Dimity, entreatingly: "massa's done gone crazy! Dis trouble has paralyzed his

intellects! I's seen it ebber sence he comed in de house. He was so fond o' my poor pickaninny, he can' stand dis suspension. You mus' s'arch and look all de harder sence *he's give out.*"

"Well, doctor, you go to bed and sleep," they said, pitying him in their rough hearts; we'll manage this job without your help. You look sick already. Don't you be uneasy. We'll not leave a stone unturned. If the gal's alive we'll find her; and if she's—" dead, they were going to say, but checked themselves. "God bless you, keep up good heart!" they cried, as they turned and left him; he making no response. "By the way, how's the young fellow?" asked one, returning; "p'raps we'd better leave one of our party to set up with him."

"No, no; I'll 'tend to him. Do go 'long," exclaimed Dimity.

"What young fellow?" asked the doctor.

"Mr. Deless, or whatever 'tis. He's here, ain't he?"

"Yes he is," cried the negress, with sudden boldness, thinking it better to confess at once, while she had the support of others.

Her master turned and looked her full in the face.

"Curses them! treacherous, every one of them!" he muttered, and without another word, he put on his coat, belt, powder-horn and knife, and taking his rifle, stalked out the back-door, and was seen no more that night.

"He's done gone crazy," wept Dimity, shaking her head.

"Hain't he ailers been a little tetchy?" asked one.

"I know. He's ailers been good to me, an' a powerful knowin' gentleman. He's lost his old ways, but I's overlooked 'em. Why he blared de yarta dat chile told on, and now he talks as if he didn' ear? Don' mind him, friends; do all ye can, jis' de same."

"That we expects to," said one of the company as they moved off.

Dimity was now alone, with full opportunity to attend to the wounded man. All that night she sat by his side, giving him the powders and stimulants which the surgeon had directed, and starting from her seat, at every sigh of the wind or rustle of a leaf. Occasionally she heard the firing of a gun

or the barking of a dog, when she would go outside and listen ; but the long, long night wore away, the full moon went down in a rosy sky, the morning birds twittered, and the patient, moving uneasily, opened his eyes and fixed them on the face of his faithful watcher, asking, faintly :

“ Have they found her yet ? ”

Dinny shook her head with tearful eyes.

“ Oh, I wish I was not bound *here*,” sighed the young man. “ I can not bear to be still ; I feel that I ought to be doing something to help.”

“ All de bes’ men in de country’s out ; you musn’ fret.”

“ What did the doctor say about *my* case ? ” he asked, presently.

For a moment the old woman hesitated, then said, very gently :

“ Dat you mus’ be still as a mouse, and take your med’cine reg’lar, an’ be nussed berry partik’ler. Ef yer was quiet, an’ didn’ ’low yerself to get excited, you’d stand a fa’r chance.”

With a sigh, the young stranger shut his eyes, remaining silent.

CHAPTER VIII.

A STROKE OF VENGEANCE.

By night of that day all the volunteers had returned to Jackson’s without having discovered the slightest trace of the kidnapped girl. It was rumored that Rob and his Indians still were across the river, and that Rob was wounded ; but this was not known for certain. It grew to be a settled feeling that Lizzie had been murdered and her body concealed.

About dark Doctor Dollar returned to his cabin. Dinny gave a cry of joy when she saw him, for she feared that he had committed suicide. He gave her no greeting, but hung up his cap and rifle as on the previous evening. He looked still paler and more worn. She hastened to place a comfortable meal on the table, of which he partook but sparingly.

and without the attempt at indifference which he had before made. The truth is, that when the misanthropic and miserable man left home, he intended never to return; he had set his face against his daughter and servant for their disobedience, and he meant never more to hold communion with human-kind. But he was—fierce, jealous, and unhappy as circumstances rendered him—but a mortal man, after all. He could not thus suddenly tear the love of his daughter from his heart. As he stalked through the wild forest, his roving eye was constantly on the look-out for some trace of his child. All manner of terrible imaginings haunted him, until his anger melted away in horror and remorseful tenderness, and he made his way home, eager to know what success others had met with. He had gone to the tavern and learned the result of the day's search, before he came home. He had not yet forgiven Dimity enough to speak with her. After eating, he took a bear-skin which hung on a peg against the wall, and sprawling it on the floor threw himself upon it, without referring to the occupant of the bed.

Such reticence was more tormenting to Dimity than much harshness.

"I declar' I shall done expire," she complained to herself. "Here I is without a soul to speak to, jis' like a penitential prisoner. De surgeon won't let none de folks come in, on 'count dat young man bein' so low, an' he can't talk, in course; and now massa's muzzled hisself like a mad dog. If eber we gets out dis yer fix, I'll scold a streak as long's from here to Saint Louis, see if I don't. It's bid'nuff to have yer heart broke without bein' obleeged to hold yer tongue, into de bargain. I never kep' still so long in my life afore; but oh, dear! all dese trials would be light as a feather, if dat chile was only safe to home once more. It's been a-t'inkin', all day what I'll get her to eat when she comes home. I'll make a pound-cake to-morrer, and a sponge-cake, an' some cup-custard, an' keep de kettle b'llin' all de while."

Ah, poor auntie, your kettle will be kept boiling a long time! Many weary hours will your anxious old eyes peer out of that cabin door, looking for the locks of gold, the flying form, the sweet, bright, beautiful face, all color and smiles and happiness, which used to meet them when they

looked. Many times your nice, frosted cake will dry up and be cast out, while you sit down, and with apron thrown over your old face, cry for the pickaninny who comes not back.

Perhaps two hours the doctor rested his exhausted frame on his bear-skin rug; then, rising, he took his arms and started for the tavern, to consult with the soldiers and others gathered there. By his advice they concluded to form a large party to cross the river that night and attempt to run down Rob Ruskin and his desperate band. They had no doubt that he had a reserve of at least forty red-skins, although he had brought but six with him on his raid. It would not do for the whole force of whites to go over, as he might at any hour recross, and make a dash on this side. It was arranged that half the recruits should remain to prosecute the search and patrol the bluffs on this side, while the other half should cross over in the latter part of the night, at the darkest and most silent hour, so as to surprise the enemy, if possible. The bravest and most skillful riflemen were chosen for this party, and they were mounted on the swiftest horses of the county. Every man was willing to give his best to the cause.

At three o'clock, having first partaken of hot coffee, and provided themselves with dried meat and whisky-flasks, in the dim light of the descending moon, the troop, led by the doctor, who assumed command of it with a stern energy which inspired the confidence of his men, swam the Missouri, and after resting their horses a few moments under the cover of a bluff, set out on an easy trot in the direction Rob was said to have taken, toward a valley which lay between two hills, at the end of the prairie, about twenty miles away. The party did not hope to surprise the enemy. They knew they would be expected, and would themselves have been on the alert for an ambuscade, had there been any places along the route where such could have been arranged. The open country preserved them from this danger, but it gave their opponents the same advantage.

The sun was up, and they had gone perhaps fifteen miles, when suddenly out of a light depression in the prairie a troop of mounted Indians spurred their horses, making for the valley. If they could reach the narrow pass opening into this

valley, or secure a position on the hills, before their pursuers came up, they would be almost certain of victory, as they would have every advantage of position. They were now nearly half a mile in advance; there were about twenty of them, while there were thirty of the whites.

"Huzza, boys!" cried the doctor, turning in his saddle and looking back at his volunteers with a face blazing with excitement; the very glance of his fiery eye electrified them with his own wild thirst for vengeance. They answered him with a shout which echoed like thunder over the prairie. Now every spur is pressed into the sides of the bounding horses, who seem to scent battle from afar, and to be as eager as their riders to plunge into its midst; every face is set, every eye flashing, every rifle is in place, and with a swiftness like the swooping of eagles, down they bear upon the flying enemy.

The two bodies of men rushed over the prairie like two small tornadoes, which enveloped the riders in a cloud of dust as they swept forward. It was impossible, for some time, to tell if the pursuers gained upon the pursued. The Indians, as usual, were well mounted, but the whites had chosen their animals with the utmost care. As moments passed, the doctor's men saw that they were nearing the objects of their pursuit, and again sent forth a wild whoop of exultation.

"We have them, boys!" shouted their leader, again turning his pale face back for an instant, from which his eyes shone like two fire-balls. They answered him with a triumphant cry.

In another five minutes they were almost upon the Indians.

"Rob Ruskin is not among them!" muttered the doctor, in disappointment, as he came near enough to make out each individual of the other party.

It was a bitter disappointment; his rifle was loaded for that scoundrel, and the blood of a score of others would not satisfy him. Never mind! These, now, and afterward — there should be more vengeance!

The Indians did not pause to attempt to fire upon the closely-approaching enemy; once safe in the pass, or on the hills, they would make a stand. With yells of encouragement to their horses, they pressed forward in a close body.

When they were not more than three hundred yards from the pass, the whites swept up, and like a stream which parts upon a rock only to close around it, they divided, rushed quite beyond the Indians, and turned to inclose them in a circle, firing upon them as they turned. Several of the red-skins dropped to the ground, their horses galloping madly away; the rest returned the fire, but with such uncertainty of aim, in consequence of the rapid maneuver of the attacking party, as not to unhorse a single adversary. Again the whites fired, with great coolness and precision, seeing the field was theirs, and then charging in, without waiting to reload, attacked the Indians with knives and rifle-butts. The red-skins attempted not so much retaliation as to fight their way out of the circle. Those who succeeded in doing so took to flight, but so complete had been the victory that but few of them escaped unhurt.

"Where is your leader?—where is Rob Ruskin?" cried the doctor, who had leaped from his horse and planted his foot on the breast of a wounded savage whom he recognized as one of those who had abducted his daughter.

The savage, albeit desperately wounded, grinned sardonically.

"If you don't tell me, I'll break your head with this," repeated his questioner, swinging his rifle-stock with an ugly motion.

The other looked him in the face in silence.

"Where is the white girl? tell me that, and I will dress your wounds, and let you go."

"Yah!" said the Indian, contemptuously, "me dead now. Don't want medicine-man."

"Tell me where the girl is."

Still the red-skin grinned in his face in devilish silence, until enraged beyond forbearance, the doctor gave the wretch a death-blow. So with all the others who were wounded. No threats could force information from them, and, one by one, they were dispatched by the infuriated bordermen. Finally they built a fire and threatened to roast the last prisoner, and they would have carried out their threat, atrocious as it was, so exasperated were they by the malicious silence of their enemies, had not the doctor himself interfered.

He had never before been in battle, and despite the dreadful incentive to vengeance which he had, he felt sick of the scene, and resisted the desire of the others to torture the prisoner, who was finally bound to a horse, to be taken home and held as a hostage—not that the whites expected Lizzie Dollar to be given up in exchange for that human brute—but there might possibly be something gained by keeping him.

The return of the scouting-party was as slow as its advance had been rapid. Men and horses were fatigued, and two of their number were wounded, though not a life had been lost. The doctor was very attentive to these poor fellows, who had risked their lives in his cause.

Great was the excitement at Jackson's, when their friends returned triumphant. No tears were shed over the fallen red-skins who had long scourged the settlement, and richly merited their fate. The rejoicings were only held in check by the thought that Rob was still at large, and that no clue had been obtained to the whereabouts of Lizzie Dollar.

The solitary prisoner was placed in the log-jail, where the doctor dressed his wound for him. When he had finished, the Indian, who had stubbornly witnessed the preparation for his torture, while out on the prairie, without the movement of a muscle, caught the physician's hand, saying in a low voice, so that others did not hear:

"Me know where great medicine's child is."

"Tell me where."

"Mebbe—some day."

No pleading of the father could make him say more at that time. When his wound was dressed again, the following day, he added to his former revelation another brief paragraph:

"Big Rob's much sick; Injin medicine-man can't find bullet. He no hurt squaw now."

The heart of the father leaped at these words; the wan, yellow visage, which had wrinkled and grown sharp in three days, lighted up with a heavenly expression of relief; he believed the prisoner, because his statement confirmed rumors which had been flying about ever since the abduction. It was now his object to be as kind as possible to the Indian in the hopes of winning still more important developments.

But a fever set in, and for several days his patient was delirious.

All this time every effort was made to discover Lizzie, but without avail. The settlers, no longer able to desert their business, and worn out with riding or plodding through the woods, were obliged to give over the search.

The doctor's sole remaining hope lay now in the wounded prisoner; him he nursed with a care he had seldom given to a patient, recognizing his return to reason with the deepest joy, for he hoped that gratitude would open his stoic heart and set his tongue to running.

During this whole period of about ten days Henry Deloss lay in the doctor's cabin, attended by the surgeon from the fort, and faithfully nursed by old Dimity. The doctor, when at home, took his meals, slept, and performed such work as there was for him to do, without once stepping aside to look at the young man, or once asking a question concerning him, no more than if he had never heard of his existence.

Yet he knew that Deloss was in a critical condition; that the probabilities were, he would die in that house.

CHAPTER IX.

A REVELATION AND A MIRACLE.

ONE day Doctor Dollar came into his house with a strange expression upon his face, which was at once noticed by Dimity—poor, faithful old Dimity, who had lost not less than twenty pounds of flesh by the wasting influence of remorse, anxiety and night-watching, and a little, perhaps, by the privation of going without her usual stimulant—"a good scold." Ah, how much she would have given to have had her dear child to scold once more! It was worse than for a snuff-taker to be deprived of her box. Only to have Lizzie coming in with berry-stains on her white apron, or dripping from a frolic in the brook; only to see her playing break-neck tricks on Black Diamond's back, or coming in three hours after

the dinner had grown cold and been cleared away, would have been a sight "good for sore eyes"—eyes sore with weeping and watching.

For Dimity had, in addition to the sorrow which had befallen the house, a great care in nursing the desperately-ill young gentleman, who was fading away before her, like snow in the sun.

As the doctor came in that day—which was the eleventh after Deloss was wounded, he met the surgeon going out. He had never questioned the surgeon about his patient, whose surprise thereat had been diminished by Dimity's confiding to him the state of the case. But now the physician of the young man felt it was no longer time for the cherishing of human enmities; he stopped the doctor on the threshold, saying, with some asperity :

"The young gentleman in your house has not three hours to live. He is young, alone, friendless. He threw away his life in the hope of serving your daughter. Doubtless he has messages to send to distant relatives and friends. For God's sake, do not let him die alone."

"Why do you not remain with him? You are capable of receiving and transferring his messages, I should suppose."

"Important duties call me away. Besides, he wishes to see you. You have hastened his death by the course you have pursued toward him. It has been anxiety of mind augmenting the bad consequences of his wound. Go to him now, do."

The bright, almost happy look on the doctor's face, which had struck Dimity as so new, clouded over; he answered, rudely :

"Attend to your business, doctor, and I will to mine."

The surgeon said no more, and mounting his horse, rode away. The doctor took a chair and sat down by his work-desk; before he knew what she was about, the old servant was on the floor at his feet, clasping his knees.

Oh, massa, massa Henry tol' me he summoned you to do justice to a dying man. He wan's to speak to you. Oh, come! massa! how kin you hate dat sweet young gentleman? Oh, you don' know how sweet an' patient he has been. Neber spoke one fretful word, neber complained, all dese weary days.

but smiles like a angel w'enever I does de leastest t'ing to wait on him. Oh, I lub him, like he was yer own son, massa. Don't be too unforgibing—you know de Lord's prayer? For-gib *us* as *we* forgib our tresspassers."

"Go away from me, Dimity; you're getting out of your proper place. I've something else to do to-day than to visit an enemy who has forced himself into my house. You are at liberty to do what you please for him—take good care of him, if you will; but don't trouble me about him?"

"I knows it ain't proper for me to be ordering of you, massa doctor; but I does order yer to git right up out dat chair and go in dat bedroom, like a Christian human mortal, and hear w'at dat young man got to say to you. Who is you, I'd like to know, dat dare refuse a fellow-creature's *dying request*?"

Old Dimity had got up from her knees and uttered her question with a dignity which is ever the accompaniment of moral power. It struck her master as rather novel that she should take to ordering him; he frowned and then half-smiled.

"Well, Dimity," he said, slowly rising, "if the young fool is really dying I will not refuse to see him. It's a pity he came out here to throw himself away in a hopeless cause. But I see vengeance in it—yes, Isabella," he continued, like one in a dream, gazing into vacancy, "one step toward aveng-
ing thee and me!"

The old negress, awed by his manner, shrunk aside, as he passed, with a stern and pallid face, into the bedroom. Utterly unmoved as he had resolved to keep himself, the doctor started slightly, and a softer expression came over his set features, as he looked upon the bed where lay the wasted form and wan face of the young stranger—a face worn with fever and pain, now blanched with the ebb of life's forces, but still beautiful with a noble beauty of soul, and sweet with resignation.

He smiled when he saw the doctor.

"It is very good of you to come," he whispered; "I suppose my life will set with the sun, or before, and I did so much wish to give you this paper, and talk with you about it."

"You must not talk much," said his visitor, with involuntary

kindness, laying his hand, through force of habit, on the other's pulse.

"The message is chiefly written," continued the young man; "if you will take the paper from beneath my pillow. My mother is dead," he added, looking appealingly at the doctor; "she wrote this letter to you before she died, and made me promise to bring it and deliver it to you in person. Could I do otherwise than to fulfill such a promise?"

"I suppose not."

"Will you take out the paper and read it?"

Reluctantly the doctor felt for the document and drew it forth; he handled it as if it were some repulsive thing, but the pleading eyes of the dying man were not to be resisted, and he broke the seal.

"Do you know the contents?" he asked.

"Yes; my mother made me read them before she sealed the package. Read it now, please, do."

The doctor gave the youth a drink of some stimulant, for his voice grew weaker, and his eyes almost wild in their feverish brightness, and unwilling to excite him by delay, immediately plunged into the contents of the letter, which were these:

"BRYANT LYNN: I am a cowardly sort of creature. I do not know but that it is more fear than remorse which urges me, on my dying bed, to make such reparation to you as is still in my power. I am proud and passionate, as doubtless you will remember, and the fire stirs in the cold ashes yet. I shiver when I think of the facts being made known to the public, as they must be in order to justify you. At times I think I will die and make no sign. Having already suffered so much, you may as well go on to the end.

"Yet again, as I say, I am a coward, and I dread to die without making an effort in the right direction. They say it is never too late to mend; they instance the thief on the cross; I know not—I am shaken by dreadful forebodings.

"My son urges me to do what it is plainly my duty to do. He is a good boy. He looks like his father; but he is a better man than his father ever was. He shames me by his unflinching integrity. I know not whence he got it—not from either of his parents.

"But, to my confusion, before you throw this aside in disgust. I am passionate, as I said, proud and jealous. When I married Henry Deless, your friend and partner, I soon found plenty of fuel on which to feed these bad passions. He was not cunning

enough, or he would not take the trouble to hide from me that he had married me for my fortune, and he *loved* another woman—the wife of his friend! Was that not enough to make me wicked? It could not be expected that my natural faults would be improved under such influences. My whole life with him was a continual aggravation. You remember, doubtless, that I did not make it very pleasant to him in return, or to any of you. I fostered misunderstandings which resulted in breaking up the friendship existing between you two. You will acknowledge that I had due provocation. I knew that my husband loved his cousin, your wife; but I never could decide whether she returned the feeling. Sometimes I thought she did, and again that she did not. Once, he almost boasted to me, in his light, laughing way, that *she did*. The truth is, Henry Deloss was one of those butterfly men, who seem to have been organized without souls—without the ability to distinguish between good and bad. He had not the reputation of a bad man; he was a general favorite in society, courted, admired, applauded, yet he was utterly without moral principle. I was not of that kind; my faults were those of the heart, his, of the head. He exasperated, wounded, tormented me, yet most people thought we lived happily together; and if any suspected otherwise, I was the party blamed.

“Well, your wife pined away and died! A few days after the funeral, you came to our house, and demanded an interview with your former friend and partner, now your enemy. I heard the message given and my curiosity and jealousy were excited. I stole down to the library which lay back of my husband's office; the door between that and the office was carefully closed by him before your conversation commenced, but I softly unlocked it sufficient for my purpose, and listened to all that was said upon that occasion. You told him of the dying confession of your wife; you accused him of having committed the greatest wrong against you which one man can commit against another—the deliberate, wilful attempt, carried on through a series of years, to alienate your wife's affection, and, when he thought this had been attained, he had endeavored, with all the brilliant sophistry in which he was so gifted, to persuade her to elope with him to some foreign land. You told him that she had refused to take this ruinous step; that she remained true in act and form, though her heart was wrenched from you, and she died the victim of a sorrow compounded of misplaced affection and remorse. You accused him of being, really, the cause of her death. You evidently felt as deeply as I should expect a man of your proud and reticent nature to feel, yet you restrained from any act of personal violence. You only showered upon him your hatred, contempt, and the curse of a desolate and broken heart. You called him traitor to the sacred ties of friendship, as well as to the rights of those who

should be dearer than friends. Then, with a sort of majestic sadness, you told him that he had destroyed all that made life sweet to you, that he had made the scenes of your childhood, youth and married life, intolerable to you; that you should go away, into a voluntary exile, where there were no women to love and no men to trust—that your course was chosen; you should drop name, connections, every thing, but your little child, and such means as were necessary to carry out your plan, and you ended by saying that you were driven from all that most men cherish by the treachery of a *friend*!

"Then you went out; my husband did not stir, after you left him; evidently he sat, covered with self-abasement, reflecting on what had passed. As for me, my blood burned in my veins with rage against him, *aye*, and *her*, who could no longer wrong you and I, but whom I hated, even in her grave.

"I was about to spring into the room like a panther, and scorch him with fierce accusations, when I heard him slip out of the chair and slide to the floor with a single, faint gasp. In an instant I recalled what he had often jestingly told me—that *there was heart disease in the family*, and he expected to die of it, some day.

"I went in and found him—dead. The agitation of the interview doubtless brought on the attack. I did not cry out. I was not sorry. I was glad. He had wronged me, always wickedly and heartlessly wronged me, making free use of my money to indulge in all sorts of luxuries, and not giving me even the poor return of fidelity. My revenge had come suddenly, but it was none too terrible for my anger. I waited until I was assured that he was indeed dead. My ear could not detect the slightest motion of the heart. Then came that part in the play for which I have to beg your pardon. I was incensed against your dead wife; and against you, without cause, except that you had been so chivalrous in your own sense of honor as to blind yourself as to what was happening before your eyes, and had always refused to listen to my suspicions, and had treated me with a sort of scorn. 'Now,' I said, 'I will have my revenge upon all of you,' and taking one of the doctor's surgical instruments from the case, one fitted to my purpose, I thrust it into that silent heart with a firm hand. I *had* loved him—I married him for love—gave him myself, my fortune. No matter; that was over. I should now be revenged upon all. I foresaw the whole thing as it occurred; that you would be accused of the murder, and either hunted down or disgraced in the eyes of the world. I wished it to be so. Thus had passion distorted my feelings. I should have pitied you, who suffered the same pains as myself. But I did not; I hated you because you were ~~my~~ husband.

"Events followed as I had planned. As my rage cooled, I was glad they did not find you. I knew that I could never

keep silent, to see you hung for a murder you did not commit ; therefore, if they arrested, tried and condemned you, I should be obliged to come forward and confess my strange and shameful action. All I was afraid of was, that you, with your Quixotic sense of honor, upon hearing of the charge against you, would return and deliver yourself up. But you did not.

"Now, I wish, humbly, to beg your forgiveness for having branded your name with a crime of which you were innocent. You have a child, and she, at least, is entitled to the justice of having her father's reputation cleared from all blight. Before you receive this, I shall be dead. My son, whose sense of honor is fit to mate with yours, is quite willing that my foolish and disgraceful act should be explained, rather than that you should remain under the ban as a murderer. He desires you to publish, at once, to the world, a brief confession which I have written out, saying simply that my husband died of heart-disease, in consequence of an angry interview, and that I, in a moment of passion, wishing to cast suspicion on another, drove the instrument into his heart, after his death. This confession I have sworn to, in presence of my son and my attorney, and it is now with the latter, awaiting your orders.

"GARCIA DELOSS SOMERVILLE."

"So your mother married again?" remarked Doctor Dolac, looking up. A faint flush rose to the pale forehead of the youth ; it was evident that his mother's story deeply grieved and mortified him, but that his sense of justice and honor had forbidden his repressing it.

"Yes," he replied ; "she married, and had two children by her second husband. My sweet little sisters ! how I wish I could see them once more."

"Your mother was a better woman than I supposed," said the doctor, as calmly as if he had not just read so important a document. "I saw the notices of your father's death, and always supposed that she murdered him."

"Oh, not so bad as that !" whispered the young man, shuddering. "She was a good, affectionate mother ; but, as she says, passionate and exacting. Being an heiress, she never learned self-control. But say you forgive her, and I will die in peace."

"Forgive her ?" said the doctor, with a light, careless laugh ; "I have nothing to forgive. I have never experienced any inconvenience from her little plot. My course of life was marked out before, and has not been varied from. Forgive

her ! certainly, if it will make you feel any better. I did have a scorn and hatred for any who shared the treacherous blood of Henry Deloss. But your actions prove that you are *not* a chip of the old block, boy, and I must forget that *I* have persecuted *you*."

"Thank you," murmured the youth, smiling ; and then he closed his eyes, and with a serene expression, said :

"Now, I suppose, I may give up."

"Not a bit of it!" cried his companion, in a very low but cheerful voice. "'While there's life, there's hope,' is a saying dear to a physician's heart. You've been dying of the blues, my boy, faster than of your wound. Set your will to work with mine, and I'll save you yet."

Henry Deloss opened his eyes in which there came an eager light. It was sweet to live ! oh, if he could but hope to live, to get out once more into the sunlight, to be strong, to walk, to help himself, to see those little sisters. He had given up all with the courage of despair. Now, he hoped—and to hope was almost to rally.

"Determine to fight it out," urged the grim physician ; "**your toes are not cold yet.**"

"Nor my heart," said the young man, faintly.

Doctor Dollar had a great deal on his mind that day—a matter of infinite importance, about which he had felt in the utmost hurry. Still it was a matter which probably would be none the worse for a few hours' delay, and this case of the sick man's would be all the worse for it. So Henry Deloss came in for a large part of a day which was to have been far otherwise spent.

Perhaps as much by the strong magnetism of his presence and touch, as by his medical skill—by that tenacity of will which clung and ~~would not~~ give him up—the doctor bore his patient triumphantly through the crisis, and laid him, weak as an infant, but free from fever, calm and safe, again on the sweet shores of life.

"Hold on to ~~me~~ ! hold on to me—I've got you," he kept saying to the dying man ; and thus, by inspiring courage to resist, the life which was slipping surely away, ebbed slowly back.

"Could you make such a thing as a bowl of chicken

broth?" he asked of Dimity, as he came out of the little bedroom after a four-hours' struggle with the great destroyer; "and make it *weak*. Just a hint of a chicken's wing in a pint of water, you know."

"Laws, massa, I kin make it any ways you orders, ef it's jist to hang de chicken up in sight o' de water," she responded, with a joyful alacrity; "dar's de fowl in de kitchen-cubbard, now, dressed an' waitin'. I felt it in my bones, 'bout two hours ago, 'twould be wanted, massa."

"Your bones have given you correct warning, for once, Dimity, though I must say they are usually false prophets. Well, you make a cup of weak broth as quick as it can be properly done; cold water, you know, to begin on, and as soon as it is done, you bring it in, and then do you sit by that young man while I go down to the village after some beef to make him some beef-tea. You bring it in, and give him one teaspoonful once in ten minutes, until my return. He's not going to die. That fort-surgeon was a fool for saying so. I'll make him ashamed of himself."

"Glory hallelujah!" murmured Dimity, under her breath, and with a step like a girl's she flew to the kitchen.

"It's allers knowed de days of meracles wasn' ober yin," she soliloquized, as she cut up the chicken. "Here's a dead man brought to life, an' I'm makin' chicken-broth for him this minute; 'a chicken's wing in a pint o' water,'" she repeated; "s'pose I must obey, but I'd like to give it to him so's 'twould bear up an egg. Never mind, we'll stuff him, one dese days, full as a tick, not wid feathers, dough, but wid w'at dey grows on. I know'd all 'long massa could save him, if he'd only do it, and dat made me feel de dreadfaler. Did anybuddy ever see sech a change since mornin'? I can't believ my own senses. I declar' and detest, ef I hadn' seen it, I wouldn' believ it. I feel as if I'd had a load o' hay lifted off my mind. Glory!" she exclaimed aloud, in a burst of thanksgiving, as she set the chicken on the fire. "Herrah for General Jackson! We's bin blessed wid a meracle right out here in the backwoods!" then, with a sudden revulsion of feeling, caused by the remembrance of a keen sorrow not yet overcome, she sat down in the door, covered her face with her apron, and burst into a smothered wail.

"My purty white pickaninny will never come back!" she sobbed; "I feels it in my bones."

"Bother your rheumatic old bones," said the doctor, coming out to look after the broth; "they're always prophesying."

He went down to Jackson's long enough to get some beef, and to make certain arrangements with five or six young men who had distinguished themselves in the prairie battle; then went home and sat up that night with his new patient.

CHAPTER X.

WHY NOT?

"I SHALL leave you to-day entirely to Dimity's care; I have given her faithful instructions," said Doctor Dollar, after breakfast the following day, to his patient. "I had news yesterday morning, of great interest to me, and I should have been off instantly if your critical condition had not demanded immediate attention."

"Have you a clue to your daughter's whereabouts?" asked Henry; "oh! why did you stop to consider *my* case?"

"Don't agitate yourself, Deloss; above all things, I forbid excitement. I have only told you this news in the hopes that it would cheer you up and give you another motive for getting well. I believe I have tidings of Lizzie. Unless that red rascal I have been nursing, down in the jail, most audaciously and maliciously deceives, I have strong hopes of clasping her in my arms by sunset of this day. Still, I try not to hope too much. These red-skins are inconceivably treacherous."

"You should have gone yesterday," repeated his patient.

"One day more of suspense on her part would be hardly too dear a price to pay for a life risked in the effort to save her," answered the doctor, smiling. "If she is situated as the Indian represents, a day will make no difference. He avers that the man who abducted her is dangerously wounded and concealed in a cave in the hills of the pass, where we fought

our battle, while my child is still on this side of the river, in the care of two old hags, who were to keep her until called for."

"God grant it," whispered Henry.

"My fear is that we can not discover her by the verbal instructions of the savage; and he will not be able to accompany us for at least a fortnight. However, we shall make every effort. Good-by. Be careful, Dimity. Don't forget my orders, and have a pot of hot coffee, and what else you please, ready for us at midnight."

Dimity, with tears of excitement rolling down her ebony cheeks, ran to the door and threw her old shoe after him for luck.

Not much was talked of in the settlement that day but the expedition which set forth that morning. Had it not been known that all talking was forbidden on the doctor's premises, Dimity might have held a grand levee, crowded by all the women of the village, who longed to talk over matters with her, in her master's absence. But, they had been warned to keep away until the young man was out of danger; and she had the long, lonely day to herself, in which to fear and hope and anticipate, until her old heart was "tuck wid anudder attack ob ole palliation."

The hours between dark and midnight were miserably long; her patient had fallen into a calm sleep, and she sat in the outer room with her eyes fixed on the clock, and her ear alert to catch the first sound announcing the return of the party.

In the mean time, the doctor and his escort, thoroughly armed to protect themselves from any of Rob's marauders who might be about, proceeded down the road, past the fort, and along the Missouri shore, for a distance of twenty miles.

They then took a trail leading into a wild and dense forest, upon which the ax of the settler had, as yet, made little impression. This they followed for two or three miles, until it became indistinguishable, a mere path, blazoned by trees. They then turned a second time into a narrow valley, or rather, ravine, in the bottom of which ran a babbling brook.

"We are on the right track, boys; in ten minutes more

we ought to find the hut," said their leader, in a suppressed voice. "Make as little noise as possible; though, if we have but the two old hags to encounter, I think we shall be equal to them."

He smiled as he said it, but his followers could see that his eye shone with an eager light, and the purple spot on his left cheek had grown crimson; they all sympathized with him in his agitated hopes and fears; if Lizzie had been each young man's sister or sweetheart, he could not have sympathized more warmly; and, indeed, more than one in that band would have been glad to be the latter, only that they had never received encouragement. In about a quarter of an hour they emerged into a little valley, but thinly wooded, and beautifully watered by the stream—a secluded spot, in which a patch of ground had been cleared, and planted with corn and potatoes. Here, in plain sight, as they entered the valley, stood a wretched log-hut, from whose chimney a faint smoke uprose, showing it to be inhabited.

"The Indian did not deceive me!" murmured the doctor. "Ride up, boys, and surround the house!"

As they obeyed his order two immense and savage dogs sprung up from sleeping in the sun beside the cabin, and bounded at the foremost, but a couple of pistol-shots silenced these ferocious guards forever; the next instant the doctor leaped from his horse and entered, followed by two of his volunteers. One swift and devouring glance about the apartment, and then a shiver of disappointment ran through his frame.

Two old crones sat by the fire, watching the kettle in which was steeping their afternoon's cup of tea—two as horrible and heartless looking old women as human eyes ever lighted upon. One of them, whose uncombed locks of gray fell straggling about her swarthy face, bore so great a resemblance to Rob Raskin, that the doctor at once recognized her as his mother, and began to pour forth a blasphemous tirade because they had killed her dogs.

"Where is the young lady you have had with you the last ten days?" demanded the doctor, in a voice which trembled, in spite of all his efforts.

He had hoped so much, and the disappointment had been so overwhelming!

"*Youny lady!*" mimicked the hag, laughing hideously; "we don't keep that sort o' trash round yer—hain't no use for't."

"Your son, Rob Ruskin, abducted my daughter, and brought her here. I have been informed by one of the Indians who assisted in bringing her. If you don't tell me where she is, and what has been done with her, I'll shoot you dead."

"She ain't been yer," persisted the old hag, sullenly.

"She ain't been yer," echoed the other.

Again the doctor's keen eye ranged the room. It was crowded with a motley assortment of things—saddles, valises, weapons, clocks, boxes, evidently containing stolen goods. There were silver spoons in the two cracked cups in which the cronies were about to take their tea; a bag of coffee and a caddy of tea (then very expensive articles in that part of the country) stood near, all, evidently, spoils brought there by the outlaw. But his eye fell upon something far more precious than any of these—a crimped ruffle, hanging on a nail by the window—a delicate frill of cambric, such as Lizzie always wore.

"Liars?" he exclaimed, advancing and seizing the ruffle; "whose, then, is this?"

There was no answer.

"I'll shoot you both as I did your dogs, if you don't answer."

Then Rob's mother began to whimper, and to say:

"They hadn't done no harm to the gal. Rob was a-goin' to marry her, and he'd sent, only yesterday for her, and the Injins had taken her to him—wherever that was."

"Where was it?" "She didn't know." "Yes, she did?" "No, she didn't—'twas across the river, somewhar'. She'd ne'er been across, and she couldn't say more."

"My God, boys, I believe I shall go mad!" cried the father, striking his forehead. "Here we have been running away from her, in her hour of peril, instead of toward her."

"Cheer up, Zinc Dollar, we'll be in time yet," said one of the boys, a sturdy young fellow who had often, himself, cast sweet eyes at Miss Lizzie. "That devil's own son was hurt, I know he was; and I don't believe he's well enough

yet to set the wed lin'-day. Come, let's back to Jackson's, and to-morrow we'll take a fresh start. We'll visit the pass again, and ferret out that den of thieves."

In gloom and almost silence they rode back the now long and weary way which had seemed so short when they were so full of hope, reaching the settlement at about midnight.

"We will rest until daylight," said their leader, "then, boys, we will double our numbers, and set forth again, and as the others proceeded on into Jackson, he turned aside to his cabin, whose door was already thrown wide open, showing Dimity standing there, a lamp in each hand, her dark face lit up by joy.

"Alone, massa?" was all she said, when he wearily dismounted, and led his horse to the stable.

Words can not picture the change which came over her; but she had a grain of true courage in her faithful soul, and seeing how tired and disheartened her master was, she uttered not a single repining word, but hastened to place on the table all the dainty dishes she had prepared in the anticipation that they would be enjoyed by her pickaninny.

After eating hastily and taking a glance at his sleeping patient, the doctor threw himself on his bear-skin only to rise again at earliest dawn, take a fresh horse, clean his arms, and proceed to the tavern where his friends were all ready for him.

Just as they were about to ride off an Indian with a flag of truce was seen swimming his horse across the river, and the party awaited his arrival with breathless interest. It was at once conjectured that he had been sent by Rob or he would not carry the white flag. When the messenger gained the shore, he advanced directly to the crowd about the tavern, asking:

"Who he be great medicine-man?"

The doctor was pointed out to him.

"Big Rob want great medicine-man.

"What does he want of me?"

"Want medicine. Big Rob much sick here"—placing his hand on his side. "He say if medicine-man make him well, he gib up white gal."

Again that bright glow of relief, which was almost rapture, lit up the father's face.

"Come boys," he said, "it seems we are to have a guide. There may be treachery in this; we must be prepared for it—keep our eyes about us."

"Yes, yes, we'll keep our eyes skinned," cried one; "we're sharp enough for Rob and his red imps, I hope."

"Come on, then. I pray the rascal has got his quietus, at least, and that we shall be just in time to hear his parting prayers." With a gladness which obliterated the traces of wearing sorrow from his thin face, the doctor set forth—having paused only long enough to give the Indian, who seemed to have ridden hastily, a drink of whisky and a piece of jerked meat—accompanied by over a dozen armed men, who kept their red guide in the center, so that, in case he misled them, himself would be the first victim.

Their route was the same as that pursued the day of the battle, the scene of which they passed, ere entering the pass.

As they gained this pass, their guide led up a rocky hill, overhung by wild grapevines, where he bade them dismount, such as wished to enter the cave with their leader. Some five or six dismounted, leaving their animals to the care of others.

Parting the thick vines where they fell over a perpendicular ledge, the guide led the way into a spacious cavern, dimly lighted from the entrance, and by two lamps which were hung against the rough walls. The doctor peered eagerly about. It was not the traps with which the place was littered which interested him, nor even the sick man, who lay upon a bed of skins, not far from the door, with a face so wasted and cadaverous that it was hardly recognizable. He looked for his child; and was again disappointed in not finding her.

"So," he said, marching up to the bed; "you're a dead man, Rob. It will make it easier for you, in the next world, to give up your ill-gotten gains before you go. Where's Lizzie?"

"That's tellin'," answered Rob, in a rattling whisper. "The bargain is—you cure me an' I'll tell where she is."

"Cure you?" looking, not without a shade of compassion, at the face where death had already set its seal. "No doctor

on earth could keep you alive an hour. Say your prayers, if you know any to say, and tell me what you have done with my child."

"I will live, I tell ye! I'm not ready to give up yit, by a long sight," rattled Rob. "I oughter had my wound better dressed, an' this place is rather damp, too. Take me out in the air, where I can see the blue sky, an' I'll git well yet."

"You'll see blue sky enough before the day is over," was the solemn reply. "Your soul's going straight out of this place, now."

"I know I've wronged you, old Zinc Dollar; but I shouldn't think you'd let a feller die before yer eyes."

"You should have sent for me sooner. Three days ago I might, possibly, have brought you through. Now mortification has set in; you are dead already, I tell you."

Rob Reskin turned his yellow face to the wall:

"Find her out, as ye kin," he muttered; and nothing could induce him to say more.

Doctor Dollar sat by him, content to wait. He knew, when their leader was dead, the cowardly Indians would not be long in betraying Lizzie's hiding-place. In about half an hour, Rob spoke again:

"Give this watch under my head to mam, and tell her it's time she began to pray," he said, and expired.

"God have mercy on his soul," said the doctor, earnestly.

Then, the four Indians who had remained with their captain, were surrounded by the whites and told to conduct them to the girl.

"Little soon done," said one, and, followed by the doctor, he led the way through another narrow cavern out upon the hill, on the opposite side from the one they had entered; and there, sitting in the door of a wigwam, with her feet bound, was Lizzie.

That moment of joy, when the father clasped his child in his arms, brought tears to the manly eyes that witnessed the scene; but their tears, and those of the beautiful girl, soon vanished.

The Indians were released, according to promise, with a warning never to show themselves in that part of the country

again; and, it being now noon, enough of their stores were taken to furnish a meal for men and horses. Merrily the food was cooked and eaten, still more merrily the procession was formed, with Lizzie and her father at its head, she, on a handsome Indian pony which they pressed into the service; and gayly they wended their way homeward through the pleasant afternoon.

The sun was just setting, and Dimity had given her young gentleman his bowl of broth, when a loud cry and uproar in the village startled her, causing her to almost drop the bowl.

Running to the door, she shaded her eyes with her hand, when what did she see but her master and her young mistress, approaching in state, surrounded by an escort of the whole village.

Dimity dropped the bowl, which broke in a hundred pieces, and running down the yard, she took Lizzie in her arms, as the pony stopped at the hitching-post.

"You good-for-nuffin chile!" she cried, shaking the young lady as if she had been a little girl in frocks; "ef dis doesn't beat all yer capers, yit! The whole country done gone crazy 'bout ye, to say nuffin of me, and yer own fadder. I hain't had nuffin but trouble wid you sence you was six year old. Yer always gettin' drownded and los' and breakin' yer neck, an' to wind up wid, ye's to let dat Robber Ruskin carry you off! It's a min' to box yer ears!" and with that, Dimity broke out into such a loud fit of weeping, that the whole village set up a cheer, which only could be checked by the doctor's reminding them of the sick young man, and asking them to go peaceably home now, and return a week from that day, when he would give them a grand party, and Dimity would show them her accomplishments in the way of cake and "chicken-fixings."

The next morning, as Lizzie was taking her breakfast, as quietly as if she were not the heroine of the hour, she suddenly rose, and rushed to the door, crying:

"Here's Black Diamond, father, or his ghost!"

And so it was. The brave fellow had been wounded, but not mortally, and had nursed his own wound, for two weeks, on the prairie where he landed, after concluding to make a struggle for his life, until he got strong enough to make his

way home. Very pleased he seemed to have the soft white arms of his mistress again about his neck; and by rest and good treatment, he gradually recovered all his former fire and fleetness.

The party came off—an out-door affair—under the trees about the house, the largest, merriest and most successful affair ever given in that region. Such fiddling and dancing, and such feasting could be witnessed nowhere except in a new settlement. Mr. Deloss, the young stranger, was not well enough to participate in the frolicking, but he shook hands with such of the old ladies as persisted in paying a visit to the sick-room.

Before the roses of June were in their fullest bloom, he was out of doors, and many were the rides he took, in slowly regaining his health, during that pleasant summer, with Lizzie, on Black Diamond, by his side.

In the fall he returned to the east, to attend to his long-neglected business; but he endeavored in vain to persuade the doctor to accompany him, and clear himself, publicly, from aspersions which clung to his name.

"I have no taste for the old life, Henry; I shall end my days here, with my plants, and in writing my work on botany. Why should you disturb a thing long quiet, and renew sorrow and excitement long subsided? If you love me, never speak of such a thing. I shall never resume my real name. Let me live and die as old Zinc Dollar. When you marry Lizzie, you must marry her as Lizzie Dollar. Then, no unpleasant stories will be revived. I have a goodly portion laid up for her. If you keep those lands you have located, you will be a very wealthy man, some day. In the mean time, you and Lizzie must make yourselves happy in your own way."

That was a lonely winter for Lizzie, yet a busy and happy one. She had a great deal of sewing to do, which Dignity regarded with a sort of continual stupefied wonder, almost concluding that it was time to give over scolding a child that was old enough to be engaged.

Lizzie was not the girl to desert her father, even to marry the man she loved. The wedding did not take place until a compromise was effected. Deloss consented to come as far west as St. Louis, and the doctor consented to go as far east;

so there they met and settled, and good old Dimity had the happiness of being housekeeper in a house which exceeded in splendor even that where she had served in the days of her youth, and scolding her pickaninny's pickaninnies to her heart's content

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The world be a better place. For two males.
Come to life too soon. For three males.
Eight school. For two little girls.
True dignity. A dialogue. For two boys.
Classroom extensive. For two males.
Hamlet and the ghost. For two persons.
Little red riding hood. For two females.
New school system of education. Boys and girls.
Colored children. A dialogue. For two males.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 8.

The fairy school. For a number of girls.
The young school. For girls and boys.
The base ball enthusiast. For three boys.
The girl of the period. For three girls.
The fowl rebellion. Two males and one female.
Slow but sure. Several males and two females.
Candia's velocipede. One male and one female.
The figures. For several small children.
The trial of Peter Silver. For seven boys.

Getting a photograph. Males and females.
The school for general improvement. For a school.
A nobleman in disguise. Three girls, six boys.
Great expectations. For two boys.
Playing school. Five females and four males.
Clothes for the heathen. One male, one female.
A hard case. For three boys.
Ghosts. For ten females and one male.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 9.

Advertising for help. For a number of females.
America to England, greeting. For two boys.
The old and the new. Four females, one male.
Choice of trades. For twelve little boys.
The lap-dog. For two females.
The victim. For four females and one male.
The dentist. For two boys.
The true philosophy. For females and males.
A good education. For two females.

The law of human kindness. For two females.
Spoiled children. For a mixed school.
Brutus and Cassius.
Coriolanus and Aufidius.
The new scholar. For a number of girls.
The self-made man. For three males.
The May queen (No. 2.) For a school.
Mrs. Lackland's economy. 4 boys and 2 girls.
Should women be given the ballot? For boys.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 10.

Mrs. Mark Twain's class. One male, one female.
The old flag. School festival. For three boys.
The court of fairy. For many girls.
Great lives. For six boys and six girls.
Scandal. For numerous males and females.
The light of love. For two boys.
The flower children. For twelve girls.
The last name. For three boys.
A discussion. For two boys.

The rehearsal. For a school.
The true way. For three boys and one girl.
A practical education. For three girls.
The monk and the sinner. For two boys.
1776-1876. School festival. For two girls.
Lord Dunsinore's Visit. 3 males and 2 females.
Witches in the cream. For 3 girls and 2 boys.
Frederick. Charade. Numerous characters.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 11.

Appearances are very deceitful. For six boys.
The cannibal family. For male and female.
Curing Betsy. Three males and four females.
Jack and the beanstalk. For five characters.
The way to do it and not to do it. 3 females.
How to become beautiful, etc. Male and female.
The only true life. For two girls.
Classroom exercises. For two boys.
I. Gustavus Vasa and Christina.
II. Tamerlane and Bajazet.

Fastidious disposition. For two little girls.
A school charade. For two boys and two girls.
Jean Ingelow's "Songs of Seven." Seven girls.
A debate. For four boys.
Ragged Dick's lesson. For three boys.
School charade, with tableau.
A very questionable story. For two boys.
A song. For three males.
The real geometer. For two boys.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 12.

Three women. For several characters.
Partners wanted. For several characters.
When I was young. For two girls.
The most precious heritage. For two boys.
The music case. Two males and four females.
The flower garden scene. For two boys.
Johnson's novel. Three males and two females.
Aware of the widow. For three girls.

A family not to pattern after. Ten characters.
How to manage. An acting charade.
The vacation episode. Four boys and two girls.
That naughty boy. Three females and a male.
Mad-cap. An acting charade.
All is not gold that glitters. Acting proverb.
Sic transit gloria mundi. Acting charade.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 13.

Two o'clock in the morning. For three males.
An indignation meeting. For several females.
Infants and household scenes. Several characters.
The noblest boy. A number of boys and teachers.
Lost board. A dress scene. For girls and boys.
Not so bad as it seems. For several characters.
A market scene. For two males and females.
Scenes vs. sentiment. For parties and characters.

Worth, not way to. For four boys and a teacher.
Nay, not worth as far. For several males.
The sleeping beauty. For a school.
A lesson in music. Two males and a female.
Old Nabby, the fortune teller. For three girls.
The village. For several little boys.
Mother is best. For several little girls.
A practical illustration. For two boys and girls.

Dime School Series—Dialogues.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 14.

Mrs. Jones Jones. Three gentls and two ladies.
The young gentls. For four gentls.
The young ladies. For four gentls and lady.
Who can call is well. For three gentls.
The young man to be a pauper. For two boys.
The young man to be a pauper. For a girl's school.
The young man to be a pauper. For two boys.
The cost of a dress. For five persons.
The young man to be a pauper. For three boys.
A practical demonstration. For three boys.

Rehennant. A long charade. Several characters.
Conscience, the artist. For lady and gent.
How to make mothers happy. For two boys.
A conclusive argument. For two girls.
A woman's blindness. For three girls.
Ran's work (temperance). For four gentls.
The fatal mistake. For two young ladies.
Facts and fables. For one gent and one lady.
Distribution. For a number of boys.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 15.

The young man's escape. Numerous characters.
A practical demonstration. For a gent and one lady.
The young man to be a pauper. For two ladies and one gent.
The young man to be a pauper. A number of boys.
The young man to be a pauper. For two boys.
The young man to be a pauper. For two girls.
The young man to be a pauper. For two ladies.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
Will it pay? For two boys.

The hour at law. For numerous males.
Don't believe what you hear. For three ladies.
A sale. For three ladies.
The chief's resolve. Extract. For two ladies.
Testing her friends. For several characters.
The foreigner's troubles. For two ladies.
The cat without an owner. Several characters.
Natural selection. For three gentlemen.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 16.

The young man to be a pauper. For four ladies and one gent.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.

The young man to be a pauper. For five girls.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 17.

LITTLE FOLKS' SPEECHES AND DIALOGUES.

The young man to be a pauper. For two little boys.
The young man to be a pauper. For a boy of boys.
The young man to be a pauper. For two little girls.
The young man to be a pauper. For two little girls.
The young man to be a pauper. For two little girls.
The young man to be a pauper. For two little girls.
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The young man to be a pauper. For two little boys.
The young man to be a pauper. For two little boys.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 18.

The young man to be a pauper. For several characters.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.

The young man to be a pauper. For four gentlemen.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
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The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.

DIME DIALOGUES, NO. 19.

The young man to be a pauper. For two families and two ladies.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.

The young man to be a pauper. For four ladies.
The young man to be a pauper. For three ladies.
The young man to be a pauper. For three ladies and one female.
The young man to be a pauper. For three ladies.
The young man to be a pauper. For two girls.
The young man to be a pauper. For several.
The young man to be a pauper. For two females and one male.
The young man to be a pauper. For one male and two females.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.
The young man to be a pauper. For a number.

Dime School Series—Dialogues.

DIME DIALOGUES, No. 20.

The wrong man. Three males and three females.
A tavern call. For two little girls.
Ned's present. For four boys.
Judge's call. For teacher and several scholars.
Telling dreams. For four little boys.
Saved by love. For two boys.
Mistaken identity. Two males and three females.
Can't read English. For 3 males and 1 female.
A little Vesuvius. For six little girls.
"Sold." For three boys.

An air castle. For five males and three females.
City matches and country houses. For three girls and one boy.
The silly dispute. For two girls and teacher.
Not one there! For four male characters.
Foot print. For numerous characters.
Keeping boarders. Two females and three males.
A cure for good. One lady and two gentlemen.
The credulous wise-acre. For two males.

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A successful donation party. For several.
Out of debt out of danger. For three males and three females.
I like Red Riding Hood. For two children.
How she made him propose. A duck.
The house on the hill. For four females.
Evidence enough. For two males.
Worth and wealth. For four females.
Waterfall. For several.

Mark Hastings' return. For four males.
Candor's. For several children.
Too much for Aunt Matilda. For three females.
Wit against wit. Three females and one male.
A sudden recovery. For three males.
The double stratagem. For four females.
Counting chickens before they were hatched. For four males.

DIME DIALOGUES, No. 22.

The Dark Cupid; or, the mistakes of a morning. For three gentlemen and two ladies.
That No'er-d-well; or, a brother's lesson. For two males and two females.
High art; or the new mania. For two girls.
Strange adventures. For two boys.
The king's supper. For four girls.
A practical exemplification. For two boys.
Monsieur Lili's in America; or, Yankee vs. Frenchman. For four boys.
Dorcy's diplomacy. 3 females and 1 gentleman.
A Frenchman, or, the converted adit. For two ladies and one gentleman.

Titanic's banquet. For a number of girls.
Boys will be boys. For two boys and one girl.
A rainy day, or, the school-girl philosophy. For three young ladies.
God is love. For a number of scholars.
The way he managed. For 2 males, 2 females, and 1 child.
Various characters, white and otherwise.
The little doctor. For two tiny girls.
A sweet revenge. For four boys.
A May day. For three little girls.
From the sublime to the ridiculous. For 13 males.
Heart not here. For five boys.

DIME DIALOGUES, No. 23.

Rhoda Hunt's remedy. For 3 females, 1 male.
Hans Schmidt's recommendation. For two males.
Cheery and Grumble. For two little boys.
The phantom dogmatist. For six females.
Does it pay? For six males.
Company manners and some impertinence. For two males, two females and two children.
The glad days. For two little boys.
Unfortunate Mr. Brown. For 1 male, 6 females.
The real cost. For two girls.

A bear garden. For three males, two females.
The busy bees. For four little girls.
Checkmate. For numerous characters.
School time. For two little girls.
Death scene. 9 principal characters and a chorus.
Dress and gold. Several characters, male and female.
Confound Miller. For three males, two females.
Ignorance vs. justice. For eleven males.
Palsie all. For four females.

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The goddess of liberty. For nine young ladies.
The three groves. For three little girls.
The music director. For seven males.
A strange secret. For three girls.
An unjust man. For four males.
The shop girl's victory. 1 male, 3 females.
The psycho-metecor. 2 gentlemen, 2 ladies.
Mean to no word for it. For four ladies.
Wine and all. A number of characters, both sexes.
Blessed are the peace-makers. Seven young girls.

The six brave men. For six boys.
Have you heard the news?
The true queen. Two young girls.
A slight mistake. 4 males, 1 female, and several animals.
Foxy and busy. Ten little fellows.
Too old and young. 1 gentleman, 1 little girl.
That postal card. 3 ladies and 1 gentleman.
Mother Goose and her household. A whole school fancy dress dialogue and travesty.

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The societies of the delectable and the miserable. For two ladies and two gentlemen.
What each would have. 6 little boys & teacher.
Sun time through the clouds. For four ladies.
The friend in need. For four males.
The hours. For twelve little girls.
In doors and out. For five little boys.
Longfate. For one male and four females.
The quest of flesh. For three boys.
Beware of the peddlers. 7 named characters.
Good words. For a number of boys.
A friend. For a number of little girls.

The true use of wealth. For a whole school.
Gleanster. For numerous characters.
Patty herself. 1 place. For two boys.
I like wise boys. For four little girls.
The regenerators. For five boys.
Crabtree's coming. Several characters.
I taught the tins of all sorts. Two males.
A wicked way made at night. One gentleman and one lady.
How to "break in" young hearts. Two ladies and one gentleman.

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China and its results, Our country's future, The statesman's labors, The man of state, Let the children weep, Columbus's glory, Ulysses's journey, The great American hero, The woman's duty, The cycles of progress, A Christmas chant, The power of Christianity. The true higher law, The one great need, The cup and the sword.	Tennant's speech, Tennyson's expansion, Martin H. Paine, The biblical man's story The master-folk man, Rich and poor, Seeing the unseen, Beauties of the law, The good girl's life, The race of life, Crowning glory of U.S. Three fools, Washington, The great inheritance, Hurricane Henry Clay,	Chloe, General Hazard Perry, Our domain, Systems of belief, The Indian chief, The independent farmer Mrs. Grimké's ball, How the money comes, Future of the nation, Loyalty to liberty, Our country first, last, and always, Benedictine, Deeds of a saint, National hatreds,	Murder will out, Strive for the best, Early rising, Deeds of a duce, States of sleep, The beggar, A flower in gem, Purity of the struggle, Old age, Beautiful and true, The worm of the still, Man and the infant, Long ago of the future, Wandering, The Deity.
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—Soundness and observations.

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2.3. V. ORIGINATIONS OF GOOD ACTINGTIME

[illegible]

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A sad story,	How the money goes,	Pretty run mad,	The sea serpent,
A string of onions,	Hun-ader's Fourth of	Long names,	Free love,
A tragic story,	July oration,	Scientific lectures,	Free education,
Cats,	If you mean no, say no,	The ever,	The water of life,
Cow boys,	J. Bows on leap year,	The cuckoo,	The water of life,
Debt,	Lav of the henpecked,	The cuckoo,	In the immortal's other
Devils,	Lot Sinner's elegy,	late chargeant Thin,	regimen,
Dew, Jr.'s lectures,	Matrimony,	The features' quarrel,	The United States Pres-
High school boys,	Nothing to do,	Harvard's valedictorian,	ident's program - o
Immortal women,	Old Cattle's umbrella,	The tarp of a thousand	quarrels,
Immortalities,	Old Cattle's son,	straps,	What I would like to
Immortality,	"Paddle your own ca-	The list of the saints,	Yancey the the Ameri-
Immortal Kiebovergoss,	nose,"	The march to Moscow,	can Minister,
Immortal letter's sake	Parody on "Araby's	The mysterious guest,	1883.
Immortal Duglow's opinions,	daughter,"	The pump,	

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The world we live in,	The power of an idea,	The two lives,	The Bible,
Woman's claims.	The beneficence of the	The true scholar,	The power and the sword
Authors of our liberty,	Suffrage,	Judges not infallible,	of a country,
The real conqueror,	Dream of the revelers,	Paradise,	The moral courage,
The citizen's heritage,	How Cyrus had the noble	Immortality of a leader,	What a world
Italy,	The prettiest hand,	Agriculture,	matter,
The mechanic,	Paradoxical,	Ireland,	The moral law,
Nature & Nature's God,	Little Jerry, the miller,	The people always con-	The rule,
The neck to go to, [arm,	The neck,	Music of labor,	The pen and pencil,
Osaka's address to the	Foggy thoughts,	Peasants and Austria,	The modern program,
Independence bell—1777	The ladies' man,	Whispering,	The morality of the world,
John Burns, Gettysburg,	Life,	The Blarney stone,	conscience,
No seat in heaven,	The idler,	The student of life,	merit and honor,
Miss Prude's tea-party,	The unbeliever,	The broken hearted,	A shot at the character.

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Hon. J. M. Stubbs' views	Good nature a blessing,	America,	Temptations of life,
on the situation,	Sermon from hard work,	"Light of recession" a	broken resolution,
Hans Schwabacher's or	Enders,	Life a sunset,	There is no death,
woman's suffrage,	The value of money,	Human nature,	places,
All for a nomination,	Meteoric disquisition,	Lawyers,	A [unclear] [unclear],
O. [unclear], [unclear],	Be sure you are right,	Wrongs of the Indians,	A [unclear] [unclear],
The sea, the sea, the open	Be of good cheer,	Appeal in behalf of Am-	original natural [unclear],
The starbangled spanner	Crashed totes, [unclear],	Ministers of war, [unclear]	The amateur [unclear],
Stay where you belong,	Turning a masculine	A Lay Sermon,	The cold water [unclear],
I, it's what you make it,	Farmers, [unclear],	A dream,	Paradise [unclear],
Who's my money?	The true greatness of our	Aspirations,	Immortality of [unclear],
Speech from [unclear],	N. England & the Union,	The moon,	John [unclear] [unclear],
Man's relation to society,	The unseen battle field,	Dates of American [unclear]	House-calling,
The faults to be [unclear],	Plea for the Republic,	The man,	It is not your business.

DIME JUVENILE SPEAKER, No. 9.

A boy's philosophy,	Flaming ball,	How the raven became	Nothing to do,
How out your row,	A [unclear],	black,	[unclear] [unclear],
Six-year-old's protest,	Live for something,	A mother's work,	Heaven,
The suicidal cat,	Live for something,	The same,	Heavenly [unclear],
A [unclear],	Live for something,	Who rules,	Peace [unclear] [unclear],
Peace [unclear],	Live for something,	A sheep story,	[unclear] [unclear],
The [unclear],	Live for something,	A [unclear] [unclear],	A [unclear],
The same, [unclear],	Live for something,	One [unclear] [unclear],	[unclear] [unclear],
The [unclear] [unclear],	Live for something,	My [unclear], [unclear]	[unclear] [unclear],
What was learned,	Country and town mice,	Man,	Nature [unclear],
Peace [unclear],	Man and woman,	I never use tobacco,	A [unclear] [unclear],
The [unclear],	Home,	A [unclear],	A [unclear] [unclear] to
The snake in the grass,	The Lotus planter,	The old bachelor,	the [unclear] [unclear],
Tale of the [unclear],	Little things,	Prayer to light,	[unclear] [unclear],
Irony's speech,	A Baby's company,	Little Jim,	Stories [unclear] [unclear],
The same, second extract	Representative,	Angelina's lament,	The [unclear] [unclear],
The [unclear] [unclear],	A [unclear] [unclear],	Johnny Sampson boots	The [unclear] [unclear],
Shepherd's scholar,	How [unclear] [unclear],	Mercy,	[unclear] [unclear],
A Mother's psalm of life,	Not after Christmas,	Clare of hours,	Little [unclear],
A mixture,	Short legs,	How Richard's sayings,	How [unclear] [unclear],
How [unclear] [unclear],	Parade on [unclear] [unclear],	Who killed Tom [unclear],	Prescriptions for [unclear]

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Hans Von Spiegel's jth,	Daking a shewat,	Schnitzerl's philosophed,	Kissing in the street,
Josh Billings's advice,	Then and now,	"Woman's rights,"	Scandalous,
A hard-shell sermon,	Josh Billings' lecturing,	Luke Lather,	Slightly mixed,
The boots,	Doctor DeBlister's ann't	The hog,	The office-seeker,
The squeezer,	Consignments,	Jack Spratt,	Old bachelors,
Noah and the devil,	Hard lives,	New England tragedy,	Woman,
A lover's luck,	Dan Bryant's speech,	The ancient bachelor,	The Niam Niams,
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